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MORAL & RELIGIOUS GUIDE

J. DAVIDSON

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To
Master Henry Lind
on his 10th birthday
from his friends
Masters. Lewis & Edwin

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS GUIDE.

Erratum.—By mistake, the pages 51 to 128 have been erroneously headed as Decalogue.

Moral and Religious Guide,

M. Gaster

BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD,

ESPECIALLY INTENDED FOR

JEWISH SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES.

DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION,

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

BY

MORITZ DAVIDSOHN.

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TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

My Lord,

When historians shall panegyrize your glorious life they will not only refer to the valuable services which you have rendered both to Queen and country in the capacity of Minister of State, but they will also highly praise your zealous exertions in promoting popular education, your championship of Roman Catholic emancipation, and in abolishing the Corporation Test Act, and your advocacy of civil and religious liberty. These ornaments will shine brightly upon coming generations, which will always cherish your memory. But I consider that my co-religionists particularly, not only in this country but also in the greatest part of the globe, will remember with gratitude that your Lordship has always been the warm advocate of their emancipation, and that by your indefatigable exertions, by your generosity and influence, almost all the barriers

which in darker ages were erected by prejudice and ignorance, have in your life-time been broken down and razed to the ground; and thus it may be hoped that the sun of intelligence will soon be able to penetrate and enlighten also those few still prejudiced nobles who yet cling to the last tottering barrier, which will soon fall. Therefore my Jewish brethren, in all generations, will remember your Lordship's name with reverence and joy for your having paved the way for their full emancipation. Having compiled a book intended as a moral and religious guide, based on the principle of universal brotherhood, I felt a natural desire to offer the first fruits of my pen to you who evince such noble sentiments, who live and move for the welfare of your fellow men without regard to creed, sect, station, or number. I therefore ventured to solicit your Lordship's permission for inscribing my work with your noble and glorious name; and for the high honour kindly conferred on me by your Lordship's gracious autographical consent I hereby express my sincere thanks, which may serve as a reminding monument to the readers of my book to show honour to whom it is due.

Your Lordship's
Most humble Servant,
MORITZ DAVIDSOHN.

London, July, 1855.

PREFACE.

In introducing the following work to the notice of the public, the Author begs to disclaim all pretension to originality or novelty, either in thought or in expression. The truths which it contains are ancient, and have formed the basis of instruction from time immemorial, and have been frequently expressed in ancient and modern languages. The Author, therefore, only compiled some fragments from the piety and wisdom of great and good men, without quoting the authors who preceded him, and presents them in the English language, hoping that they may prove useful in the instruction of "children of a larger growth," or in confirming the faithof the adult. His objects in the publication may be thus simply expressed:

1st. To furnish a book for schools, in which the fun-

damental truths of religion and morality would be generally taught, reserving it for teachers, who are entrusted with the sacred mission of educating youth in piety and religion, to explain and illustrate these truths in detail.

2ndly. To enable those who have been deprived of the advantages of early religious training in some measure to repair the loss, and to become intimately acquainted with the relations and duties of human life, that the child and parent, the husband and wife, the employer and the employed, may become fully acquainted with their condition, privileges, and obligations in society. The author indulges the hope that an attentive consideration of these truths may be productive of domestic enjoyment, and of increased prosperity, peace, and harmony in the intercourse of human life.

3rdly. That the general reader may be reminded of his duties as a creature to the great Creator, as a citizen to the state, and as a member of the human family to his fellow men.

4thly. To remove the injurious prejudice, arising either from misunderstanding or design, that the

Jewish doctrines or laws are immoral or pernicious, and, on the contrary, to show that there is nothing in the religion of Jews that would tend to disqualify them from the possession of equal civil rights and privileges with their fellow men of another creed. The writer indulges the hope that the study of this book may serve to counteract this bias and dissipate error and free the public mind from these erroneous impressions.

With these motives, he submits the work to the attention of the public. Should its contents prove useful and interesting, he will be fully rewarded for his labours; he neither affects to despise the shafts of criticism, nor would he willingly provoke them; his only pleasure will be derived from the consciousness that he has sought to serve the interests of morality and religion.

If any erring mind become thereby enlightened, any transgressor reformed, any character elevated, his purpose is accomplished, he will be happy to think and feel that he has not lived in vain, the vicissitudes of life will be borne by him more calmly, and future positions of trouble and danger will be illumined by the hope that when he shall depart from the scenes of this

world, the consciousness of leaving behind him some vestiges of moral influence will accompany him to the regions of immortality.

It would be more than vanity were the Author to imagine for a moment that he will satisfy the minds of all readers, whose views are so various, or were he to think that the reader will find in this work a complete treatise of Jewish theology; he has only furnished the essential elements, which may serve to future labourers, and the materials may be employed in constructing an edifice in which inexperienced youth may find a refuge from the storms of unbelief, irreligion, bigotry, and hypocrisy. The author will be satisfied with having carried a few stones to the foundation of the holy edifice, or with having provided a drop of oil for the sanctified lamp.

THE AUTHOR.

London, July, A.M. 5615—1855.

INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

THE NATURE AND OBJECT OF INSTRUCTION.

THE nature of man disposes him to seek enjoyment. The instance of the prince and the beggar supply us with illustrations of this truth. Man seeks to be always happy; and his ideas of happiness comprise bodily health, sufficient clothing, a comfortable dwelling, freedom from anxiety and care, and the participation in pleasure.

To acquire these materials of enjoyment, he studiously avoids the sources of disease and sorrow, and labours with industry and perseverance to acquire the wealth which will render his future prospects bright and peaceful. But let us remember that death acquires dominion

over the body only; this becomes the subject of corruption, whilst the soul—secure of immortality—enters the invisible world, in the expectation of reward or punishment, for actions which are either good or bad. Every reflecting man will therefore at once perceive that there are spiritual wants, and that for these provision must be made, real happiness being identified with spiritual well-being.

The wants of the body are insignificant, compared with those of the soul; the former extending rarely beyond threescore years and ten, the latter throughout eternity. To have, therefore, an inheritance beyond the grave, a portion in the spiritual world, is to possess happiness surpassing all imagination in the prospect, and no estimate of its enjoyment is commensurate with the vast and astounding reality.

SECTION II.

In the pursuit of spiritual good we must be guided by the instructions of the wise and learned, and walk in the paths of morality and virtue, cultivate the highest order of benevolence which springs from the fear of God,

and blend our love of him and that of man. The casual observer may feel disposed to inquire, if all mankind be supposed to be unanimous in their efforts to be happy here and hereafter, how can we account for the fact, that many perversely injure their faculties, and destroy their prospects of happiness? For instance, the drunkard does not refrain from the pursuit of pleasure, and though warned by sickness, and the gradual approaches of death, he does not hesitate to destroy his prospects of acquiring happiness hereafter; the sick man obstinately refuses to drink the draught which would restore him to health; and other illustrations of human folly and obstinacy lead us to the conclusion, that the human race does not adopt the means of carrying into effect this ardent desire to insure happiness in both worlds. A little reflection will, however, remove the difficulty of these apparent contradictions. It may be admitted that all men desire and seek happiness, while it is evident that few understand the only means by which it is to be acquired. Men are governed by appearances rather than by realities. Certain pursuits seem good; but on close inspection we discover their emptiness; they promise pleasure, but it is evanescent, and such pleasure

is discovered to be the forerunner of pain. The virtuous action may be apparently painful, and may summon us to the exercise of self-denial, whilst its results may be of the most pleasing character. The reflecting man will not therefore be governed by appearances, but he will pause and consider, whilst the thoughtless and the vain man will rashly embrace the enjoyment of the fleeting hour.

Wine is pleasant to the palate, and medicine bitter; the wise man will regulate his appetite, so as to avoid the sin of drunkenness, and in the hour of sickness will employ the remedy, and be restored to health; whilst the wicked man will indulge his passions to excess, and become like the beasts that perish.

SECTION III.

To distinguish accurately between the evil and the good requires an amount of judgment and experience which we rarely discover in mankind. To perceive not only the action, but the consequences which flow from its commission—to detect the pleasure or the pain which are the ulterior results—these are attainments to which the most enlightened of the human family aspire.

Hence the evil is sometimes selected in preference to the good from a wrong perception of things, from error in judgment, or the predominance of imagination over reason. The Scriptural phrase that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," conveys the idea that man is young, inexperienced, weak, subject to the dominion of the passions, grasps at the shadow, and neglects the substance, mistaking the evil for the good.

SECTION IV.

As the traveller, when visiting unknown shores, seeks the assistance of a guide, before he ventures to explore the country, and associates with companions on his journey until the road has become familiar to him; so the discerning youth will learn upon reflection to distrust his own judgment, and to seek the assistance of parents and teachers, that he may be conducted in the paths of truth and righteousness. Thus will his temporal and spiritual welfare be amply provided for, and he will avoid those follies and vices which are offensive to God, and dishonourable to man. For the soul to be without knowledge is not good; happiness and knowledge are twin-sisters, and both are the handmaids of devotion.

As no man can erect a house without materials, which the builder arranges in their proper positions, so knowledge, which is the accumulation of ideas, affords the means and motives to good actions, presents to view the rewards of virtue and the punishment of vice. Hence arose the saying of the Sages, that the ignorant cannot be really virtuous. Every man, however separated from others by his faith and religion, can acquire spiritual good, strengthen the soul with knowledge, and thus walk uprightly before God and man. So the Fathers teach us, when they say: "The virtuous of all nations will have a share in the future world."

SECTION V.

Upon the Israelite, however, a more imperative obligation rests. To acquire knowledge, and practise virtue, is not presented as an object of choice, but of solemn obligation. He has a Law, given by Moses, promulgated on Sinai by the Almighty, accompanied with such demonstrations of the presence of the Deity, that it would prove the height of impiety to resist it. The Law was not bestowed on Abraham, but on his descendants, nor even on these till many generations after his

death. Then after stretching forth *His* hand to redeem his people, after wonders and signs in Egypt, the Law is given amidst the solitudes of the desert, and the thunderings and voices of celestial hosts in their adoration of the Lawgiver.

SECTION VI.

The brevity of the Law has been compensated for by the instructions of the prophets, on whom devolved the task of teaching it more fully. They taught on the Sabbaths, festivals, and the first day of the months, what the conduct of the Israelites should be, what they should do, and what they should avoid, and when the spirit of prophecy had ceased, men of learning and wisdom assumed the task of unfolding the beauties and mysteries of the Law.

It is recorded in Treaties Aboth, "that God communicated laws to Moses which were unwritten, that these were traditions, faithfully preserved by Joshua and the great Synod, and as they were too numerous to be contained in the Holy Book, they were denominated the *oral Law*, whilst the Scriptures were regarded as the *written* Law; the two productions constituting one

whole, each being an integral portion of the Mosaic Law."

[Such is the view adopted by the majority of the Jews, who consider themselves bound by the writings of the Sages of the Mishna and the Talmud. But the Caraites, and some of the Jews of the present day, known by the name of the "Reformed Israelites," do not subscribe to this doctrine. They profess a belief in the divinity of the *written Law only*, and although they do not repudiate the practice of many of the customs enjoined on the authority of the Talmud, and which are not found in the Bible, they merely regard them as the recommendations of men who were good and wise and zealous for the promotion of Judaism, but who were not inspired.]

As the perfection of the Jewish nation depends upon their due observance of the Law, I shall endeavour therefore to show, firstly, that the conduct and character are to be formed by obedience to the Law; and secondly the doctrines to be received, and the morals to be observed, on which the salvation of mankind depends.

SECTION VII.

It is necessary that we should diverge from these topics for a moment to contemplate the dignity of man.

Man is the noblest work of God, the richest exponent of the wisdom and goodness of the great Creator; the structure of his body and the endowments of his spirit, place him on the summit of animal creation. Whilst various animals evince sagacity, in many instances apparently almost to a level with human intelligence, there is one pre-eminence by which man, even in his savage and uncultivated state, is distinguished; namely, the firm conviction implanted within his mind of the existence of a Supreme, though to him unseen, Being, holding sovereign sway over his destinies, and entitled to his exclusive homage. His powers of reason and of determination invest him with a dignity that is sublime; the one aids him in distinguishing the evil from the good, the other determines and fixes the line of conduct thus prescribed. Reason affords him the power of controlling, regulating, and wisely directing the passions of his nature, forming the habits of prudence, temperance, justice, and benevolence; and his freedom or security

from interruption and from extraneous agency renders every action an object of approbation or condemnation, deserving either reward or punishment. The importance of possessing such powers will be immediately seen. Without self control, inclinations would degenerate into raging lusts, passion would embody itself in action the most offensive and criminal, whilst self restraint, and the freedom of the human will, confer the blessings of self-approbation and a tranquil conscience; for conscience is but the sense of pleasure or of pain with which our actions are contemplated. To impress these truths more fully on the mind, we perceive that the very condition of our nature instructs us in the hope of gradual and progressive perfectibility. We are born the most helpless and dependent of all creatures; our childhood is the longest in duration, our faculties the most slowly developed, but our superiority over other portions of the animal creation is the result of long-continued observation and experience.

Nature thus demonstrates the importance of self improvement, of directing knowledge to the pursuit of virtue, and of thus ultimately attaining to the enjoyment of happiness in both worlds.

SECTION VIII.

Virtue is the highest exercise of the human faculties, the perfection and beauty of the soul, the love of the real and the true, and the rejection of the imaginary and the false, the selection of the good and refusal of the evil, in other words, it is the conformity of the mind and the affections to the will of God.

SECTION IX.

Religion is the highest and most developed form of virtue. The terms resemble lines drawn from the circumference, each of which terminates in one common centre. They are the source of life, and teach us to escape the snares of destruction.

The design of religion is to acknowledge God as the Creator of the Universe, to adore his wisdom, power, and goodness, as evidenced in Creation and in the revelation of his will, and to obey his dictates, in the due observance of the precepts of his Law. Religion renders man happy; without its hopes, he is abandoned, and is an inhabitant of a forsaken and fatherless world. It

purifies the heart and character, and claims our regard as the highest boon that heaven can offer to an erring race.

SECTION X.

Fear:—"As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

An earthly parent solicitous for the prosperity of his children is an imperfect type of the tender mercies of our heavenly Father, and though man cannot agree to adopt one uniform mode of faith or worship, yet every intelligent being acknowledges a Creator and a God, and the virtuous and religious of all nations may without presumption look forward to the prospect of happiness hereafter. To fear a Being so great and good is an emotion to be cherished with delight. It is a fear, be it remembered, that is associated with no terror; it is the reverence of an affectionate and grateful child, or the awe which a creature feels towards a Creator, a subject towards a gracious Sovereign, and a fervid desire to avoid the displeasure of the greatest, the wisest, and best of Beings.

SECTION XI.

A sacred duty rests on the Israelite of remaining faithful to that religion which his ancestors accepted for themselves and their posterity, and to this they swore obedience and entered into a covenant with God. To deviate then from the observances enjoined by Moses would be to invoke the curse which the whole nation uttered before the Eternal. As the descendants of Abraham, and the heirs of promise, we must adhere to the religion we profess, and allowed by every sect to be the most ancient and the mother of them all, a system of truth, expressive of the *omnipotence* and *omniscience* of the great Creator, who alone laid the foundations of the heavens and earth.

CHAPTER I.

SECTION I.

THE DECALOGUE, OR THE TEN WORDS.

We have previously remarked that the Lord redeemed the children of Israel from Egypt, that after the redemption the day of glory dawned, and God revealed himself to Israel.

For this event they appear to have been prepared, and were anxiously waiting to hear the voice of the Almighty.

The shrewdest philosophers had failed to discern the will of the Almighty; their reasoning, however vast and profound, was exceedingly obscure; they knew not God, and could arrive at no results which would be attended with advantage to mankind. These efforts, however,

aid us in interpreting the meaning of the Divine will, the commands and doctrines which abound in revelation.

The ten commandments are generally divided into two separate classes, our duties to God, and our duties to man; and as an illustration of this division we may observe, that the name of God is not mentioned in the second five, and that they were written on a separate table of the covenant with the finger of God.

SECTION II.

PROCLAMATION FROM MOUNT SINAI.

1st Command:—"I am the Eternal God who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and the house of bondage."

This first command embraces the recognition of Divine supremacy, *the Eternal and Almighty One*, the Being who exists alone and underived, admitting none to share his sovereignty or to usurp the homage due to him—the Lord, or Governor, who lives through all time and space, pervades creation with his presence, and whose immensity and eternal sway surpass our highest

thoughts. This Being reveals himself as one already known, perceived by human intellect as the Creator of all worlds, recognized by Israel as his Redeemer.

The absence of all attempts to prove the reality of the Divine existence is the clearest evidence that the truth had been already established, and was rendered palpable. The injunction assumes additional interest, therefore, from its association with the history of Israel. God was their deliverer; he recalls it to their remembrance, and memory would supply abundant instances of wisdom, goodness, and mercy so significantly displayed. (See Sect. xii.)

SECTION III.

2nd Command:—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me; thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image; or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the

iniquities of the father upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

This commandment forbids idolatry, the indulgence of any conception which would ascribe to the Deity any form or shape. It admonishes us that God is infinite, and, therefore, beyond imagination, and that to compare his nature with that of any material object, is to dishonour and defile his name. It urges us to bend before his throne with lowly reverence, to pray to him alone, to pour out our hearts with gratitude for mercies which we receive, and to expect deliverance in seasons of distress from him alone.

Those who make to themselves images, and bow down to and worship them, are taught that the Lord is jealous, that he will not suffer so gross an outrage on his majesty to escape with impunity, that reverence paid to idols leads men to forget the Almighty, to violate his laws, and ends in vice and misery, that ignorance and superstition flow from idolatry to corrupt the heart, darken the intellect, and degrade the character.

In the common course of events, the effects of the

father's sin descend upon his offspring, diseases the result of excess and vice become hereditary for generations; the prodigal leaves his children poor, the miser by example entails the curse of avarice; and nothing more than this appears to be embodied in the threatening, to show that the laws of nature and society are in harmony with the dictates of revelation. The virtuous man, however, who has descended from an impious parent need entertain no apprehension, if he select the good and renounce the evil; his reward will be increased by the courage and resolution which he has displayed; and on the other hand the descendant of pious parents is forbidden to indulge the hope that his transgressions will escape the eye of justice or punishment, which will fall with more relentless severity, as due to unprovoked transgression.

The Prophet confirms this view when he declares: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Ezekiel xviii. 20. (See Sect. xiii.—xv.)

SECTION IV.

3rd Command:—"Thou shalt not take (bear) the name of the Lord in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

This command does not exclude the solemnities of swearing in courts of justice, where appeals to the holy name of God may subserve the interests of truth and justice, nor is it merely designed to rebuke and condemn false oaths taken for the purpose of extortion or deceit; for these the Law has made separate provisions. It embraces a wider range, and warns us against levity and thoughtlessness, impiety or pride, to use the name of God with due solemnity and reverence, remembering that God is great, and high, and holy, and the disparity between a creature and a Creator is so great as to require awe and subjection and reverence for his name. This commandment is also violated whenever we address God in prayer, and the sentiments of our hearts do not correspond with the prayer of our lips. (See Sect. xvi.)

SECTION V.

4th Command:—"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days thou mayest labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor daughter, man nor maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

This command is simple and explicit; it recognizes the importance of commemorating by a solemn act the creation of the world. Its observance was designed to furnish a standing and imperishable monument of the completion of Almighty skill in the formation of the world. God rested, and, therefore, the obligation is imposed on man that he should rest, and that by means of the intellect bestowed on him he should contemplate the manifestations of Divine wisdom, power, and beauty, which are alike apparent in the stage of nature and revelation. (See Sect. xvii.)

SECTION VI.

5th Command:—"Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Eternal thy God giveth thee."

This command is justly ranked amongst the first class, and as one of the duties which man owes his Maker. The reason is obvious, and the inference is clear, that he who regards not an earthly parent will be disobedient to a Heavenly Father; the analogy is distinct, and resembles the relation of the shadow to the substance, the emblem to the reality. He who in utter disregard of the claims of nature can treat a parent with levity or contempt, can neither honour or love his Maker. The man who forgets the earthly parent, the author of his being, will be unmindful of the Heavenly Father; and the duties which enjoin honour and reverence for the one, entail obligations the most important and impressive towards the other.

The duty urged by the commandment appeals to the common sense of mankind for its enforcement; it brings to our recollection, as arguments to sustain the obli-

gation, the tenderness and care with which the scenes and wants of infancy and childhood have been watched. We remember our helplessness and dependence, the affection, so deep and full, of an anxious mother, the provision which anticipated every want, shielded us from danger, fostered our growth, ministered to our enjoyment, and surrounded us with all the appliances of love and gentleness. When, therefore, the commandment urges us to honour our father and mother it receives the sanction of fond remembrances, the aid of rational and just claims, which are coeval with our existence, and the authority of God blends with the sympathies and sense of justice implanted in our breast, which urge us to honour and obey. The nature and object of the commandment is equally intelligible; honour to our earthly parents involves the act of ministering to their support, the aid of sympathy, relief, and protection, to shield them from the rigours of poverty, want, reproach, and shame, to render the declining years of life pleasant, and to smooth by kind offices their passage to the tomb. (See Sect. xix.)

SECTION VII.

6th Command:—"Thou shalt not commit murder."

Wanton destruction of animal life is reprehensible, though it be only an insect which dies. The killing of an animal can only be justified by the necessity which man experiences to obtain food, or to prevent his own destruction. The importance attached to human life arises from the impress of our Maker's image; it is the destruction of a noble pile, reared by the hand and adorned with the wisdom of the Almighty. This commandment therefore impresses additional value on human life, proscribes the infliction of injury to life or limbs, enjoins on all the utmost regard to the integrity and perfection of our bodily structure, and declares the murderer to be guilty of the most heinous crime. (See Sect. xxi.)

SECTION VIII.

7th Command:—"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

This offence strikes at the root of every social compact and institution. Adultery severs the bond of union,

annuls the marriage contract, plants discord in the household, and sows the elements of moral pestilence amidst scenes of confusion and crime. God therefore enacts the avoidance of the crime, lends his high sanction to virtue, and warns the guilty that they shall not escape unpunished. (See Sect. xxii.)

SECTION IX.

8th Command:—"Thou shalt not steal."

This command is addressed to those covetous propensities which could lead us to disregard the rights of others in the great community of man. It is rigid and inflexible, and requires us to abstain from appropriating to ourselves that which is not our own. It recognizes property as the right of the possessor, as that which is useful to his protection and support, and applies itself to the sacred regard which should ever be maintained for the fruits of industry and skill. It embraces the smallest infraction; for he who contracts the habits of peculation in trifles will find his mind become hardened and impervious to the perception of greater wrongs, will sink into fraud and dishonesty, usury and

deceit, false weights and measures, and ultimately be abandoned as the prey to the meanest and most contemptible vices. (See Sect. xxiii.)

SECTION X.

9th Command:—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

Falsehood without the sanctity of an oath has been in every age the object of the abhorrence both of God and man; it threatens to sap the foundations of mutual confidence, and to destroy the intercourse of man with man. How much more revolting and offensive, then, must perjury appear, when we consider the peril in which our names or lives are placed? The perjurer inverts and destroys the whole character of evidence, causes the punishment of the innocent, or the acquittal of the guilty. Such abominations deserve the heaviest penalties, and the safety, interest, and existence of a community demand that he should be regarded as a felon stained with the deepest guilt, and visited with the direst punishment which human justice can inflict. (See Sect. xxvii.)

SECTION XI.

10th Command:—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything else which belongs to thy neighbour."

The desire of acquisition is lawful, and becomes the source of wealth. The commandment is not therefore directed against this desire, but against its irregular and exorbitant excess; when this desire renders us insensible to the claims of justice, to the rights of property in others, or leads us to violence or fraud, it then becomes an evil and a crime.

A transient wish for the possessions of another, which passes away and is forgotten with the moment which gave it birth, is not the object of condemnation, and cannot be characterized as covetous, but the desire which is fanned and fostered, developed and nursed, which grows into the habit of covetous and inordinate ambition, against this the ordinance of the Almighty is imperative. We may admire the beauty of our neigh-

bour's dwelling, the luxuriance of his grounds, the produce of his fields, his domestic enjoyments, his retinue and state; a momentary impulse may induce us to wish that these were ours, yet this state of feeling differs materially from the long-continued indulgence of a desire, from excess of unlawful passion, from a series of intrigues or acts of violence, which might lead us to their possession; the former may be the offspring of folly, the latter is the recklessness of crime.

Against covetousness, and avarice, and unlawful ambition, the sentence of the Eternal God has been directed, and woe unto that man who contendeth against his Maker. The potsherds may strive against the potsherds of the earth, but a controversy with God must be succeeded by overwhelming confusion and disgrace. The testimony of revelation is aided by the voice of reason; both admonish us of the danger of inordinate desire. Man is not to be considered as the slave or sport of passion, but as its master, appointed to control and guide its movements, curb its violence, and restrain its excess. (See Sect. xxv.)

CHAPTER II.

SECTION XII.

THE sublimity and beauty of the Ten Commandments, and their important bearings on the welfare of the community, deserve a more elaborate investigation.

As the source of moral duty and obligation—the root of every social virtue—they possess peculiar interest to a reflective mind. As a stream which, though small in its source, expands in its increase, till it becomes a mighty and majestic river, fertilizing every land through which it passes, so the commands of the Almighty in their relations to peace and purity, the social virtues, and even national grandeur, become the topics of profound inquiry and grateful recollections. They are empha-

tically a light unto our feet; the paths of virtue by their aid become illumined, and the paths of misery and vice become obnoxious and objects of disgust. Their moral value is inestimable in the amount, and demands the universal homage of the human race. But, to notice them each in particular, we remark that the first commandment recognizes the deliverance of the nation from the Egyptian bondage, the reason for which is obvious. It was no ordinary event, but one so striking, recent, and impressive, that the motive to gratitude for the redemption of Israel must have been most intense. What was involved in their remembrances of slavery? Hard labour, stern oppression, execution, weariness, death, the disruption of every social tie. They were wanderers in a strange land, with no eye to pity them, and no arm to redress their wrongs. From this condition they are released, brought under the guidance of Moses to the wilderness, fed miraculously from heaven, and the transition must have been so wondrous, the happiness so great, that no motive to obedience could have possessed such power as the following words:—

"I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

This may also be regarded as implying that the descendants of Abraham were bound to observe the law of the Almighty; that the Gentile world was not included in the obligation, the same reason being assigned for the first as for the fourth commandment, "And thou must remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt." From these considerations, then, it becomes obvious, that no efforts should be made to induce others to accept our faith, to proselytize the people among whom it may be our lot to dwell. It is equally clear that we should not despise others because they do not live according to our usages or laws, which were not designed for them. Other nations are only bound to observe the moral laws or the voice of conscience; as the precepts enjoined on the children of Noah: 1st, to abstain from idolatry; 2nd, from blasphemy; 3rd, from killing or wounding our fellow men; 4th, from theft and fraud; 5th, to exercise justice; 6th, not to commit adultery or incest; and, 7th, not to eat the flesh of an animal until life be extinct; but the Law which Moses commanded us is the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. (Deut. xxxiii. 4.)

SECTION XIII.

From the second command we learn, that we should place our trust in the Eternal God and in no other being; that we should not attempt to represent the Most High by any corporeal form, or clothe him in our conception with attributes of earthly power; that as a spirit pure and incorporeal no symbol can depict, no emblem show his purity or beauty; that these attempts to liken the Most High and Holy One to earthly form or figure diminish his lustre, and are productive of mental darkness and disorder.

The command enjoins also the renunciation of gross and revolting superstition. "Thou must be perfect with the Eternal thy God." (Deut. xviii. 13.) God desires the happiness of man, and to promote this, he claims exclusive homage and confidence. Nothing tends so effectually to destroy the happiness of man as superstition and idolatry. False conceptions of the Divine nature lay the foundation of every social and moral evil; idolatry corrupts the heart, blinds the understanding, perverts the moral powers, and leaves our nature a prey to every species of extravagance and folly.

SECTION XIV.

The pages of history teem with the evidences of abominations the most foul, vice unmasked and in its hideous array, the relations of human life neglected and forsaken, the garb of decency removed, and every habit which could refine and exalt our nature trampled upon and renounced. Such are the fruits of idolatry, such the lessons taught by superstition; from these we turn away with unmitigated aversion and abhorrence to the pure and holy precepts of Revelation.

Against these practices we are especially warned: "Thou shalt not learn to imitate the abominable customs of these nations; no one shall be found amongst you who causeth his son or daughter to go through the fire, nor any one who is a fortune-teller, observer of clouds, an augur, conjurer of snakes, or a wizard; for whoever does any of these is an abomination to the Eternal." (Deut. xviii. 9.)

SECTION XV.

The threatening with which this commandment closes, "visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation," appears to be irreconcilable with the declaration made: "The parent shall not die for the children, nor the children perish on account of the parent, but each for his own sins." (Deut. xiv. 16.) It is evident, however, that the difficulty is removed by the accompanying clause, viz., those "that hate me." If, therefore, the descendants of a wicked man continue to hate God, the penalty descends, but the principle of individual responsibility remains untouched; the conduct of the parents cannot be pleaded in extenuation of the children's sin, nor the conduct of children be estimated by its relation to the conduct of parents. The fundamental law of the Divine Government remains amidst all the influences of custom and example: "I will judge every man according to his ways." (Ezekiel xviii. 30.)

SECTION XVI.

The third commandment relates to the manner in which we are to use the name of God; to recognize the reverence which is due from a creature to a Creator, to venerate the highest and holiest name which the universe contains. Even prayer, if unaccompanied by devotion, becomes offensive, an unnecessary oath a sin, a false oath an unpardonable act of profanation and disregard: "And you shall not swear falsely by my name, then wouldst thou thus profane the name of thy God. I am the Eternal." (Levit. xix. 12.)

Another violation of this commandment is seen in swearing falsely; when, for example, a man seeks to support an assertion known to be false by the solemnity of an oath, an appeal to the presence and justice of the Almighty, the act is one of taking the name of God in vain. And if a man carelessly or wantonly uses the name of God on light and trivial occasions, where a simple assertion is all that is requisite to ensure belief, the command is disregarded, he takes God's name in vain.

The claims of justice sometimes demand the sanction

of an oath, as a security which the administration of human laws requires. Yet even in this case the act should be regarded with due solemnity and preparation, that we may not lightly or profanely give utterance to the hallowed name; for every prudent man will consider maturely the importance which attaches to the performance of a sacred duty.

In short the obligation embraces so wide a range that it is scarcely possible for us even to glance at its important bearings. Suffice it to say, that its great object is to inculcate reverence for the Supreme, as the Father, Creator, and moral Governor of mankind, to enjoin that humility which springs from the condition of a finite and imperfect creature, to teach us that no violation of his sanctity will be permitted to pass unpunished, and thus directly to preserve the relations of man to the Creator, and his dependence on him.

SECTION XVII.

The fourth commandment enjoins the consecration of the Sabbath in honour of the Eternal, and its objects appear to be that we should by this perpetual ob-

servance express our faith in the existence of a Creator, that he formed, governs, and sustains the universe. The universal Benefactor and Parent of our race, its perpetuity serves to demonstrate our confidence in his immutability and love, and every revolving period demands some fresh acknowledgment of his presence. On this day rest is enjoined, and abstinence from labour and worldly occupations, that we may direct the mind to acts of worship in thanksgiving and prayer, bring the actions of life under our serious review, and form those resolutions of prudence and integrity that may conduct us safely through the present scene. "If thy foot rest on the Sabbath, and thy labour cease on my holy day, if thou callest the Sabbath a delight of the soul, consecrated wholly to the satisfaction of the Eternal, and if thou honourest it by not pursuing thy usual occupations, and if thou abstainest from vain desires and speaking of thy worldly affairs, then wilt thou surely find delight in the Eternal." (Isaiah lviii. 13.) Such are the peculiar solemnities with which the day has been invested, and such the kind of thought and occupation, and to these we refer as evidence of its importance and interest.

SECTION XVIII.

The day prescribed is the seventh, and from the Divine appointment there can be no appeal; all sects agree as to the original day of its observance, but assign various reasons for the change which has been instituted. Christians kept the seventh day for centuries after the foundations of their faith were laid. But subsequently they substituted the Sunday. The Mahometans fixed Friday for their Sabbath. They are at liberty to do so, for the command was not addressed to them; but the Israelite is bound by the most solemn obligation to retain the day prescribed, and whilst this circumstance separates the nation from all others, to introduce the elements of change into an everlasting covenant would be to set at nought the authority which has issued the command. The faith and hope of Israel are identified with its observance and perpetuity.

SECTION XIX.

The fifth commandment enjoins honour to parents. This duty flows from natural relation and dependence.

A reflective mind will perceive the adaptation of this commandment to our nature. There is a moral beauty in the act of rendering both honour and esteem to an earthly parent. Gratitude urges us to the performance of the duty—honour is due where benefits have been bestowed; every age has demonstrated the instinctive and sympathetic approval of mankind, in the reverence which has been cheerfully rendered to the aged, and the abundant provision made for their protection and support. The nature of this duty demands consideration; it implies that the child should speak to parents with deference and respect, receive rebuke with humility, and endeavour by every means to render their condition happy. How invigorating to the heart of a father must filial piety prove; with what emotions of gladness must he watch the development of these seeds of virtue, and what incessant thanksgiving must continually flow to the throne of heavenly grace! "Strive thou that thy father and mother may be glad, and that those who educated thee may find pleasure." The promise which is attached to the command is indicative of its importance in the social economy. Without this the scenes of domestic life would be darkened, their relations be disturbed, and

discord and inextricable confusion would ensue. The All-merciful has, however, promised that high rewards shall accompany obedience, that every act of self sacrifice in which we minister to others rather than to ourselves meets with his approbation and secures a rich reward.

SECTION XX.

The only limit placed to this observance is, when honour to parents interferes with the discharge of duties towards God or the dictates of conscience. In such a case the higher claim prevails, since nothing can justify the neglect of duties of so high and supreme a character. The same lesson is inculcated in another precept: "Each man shall fear his mother and father, and observe my Sabbaths. I am the Eternal your God." (Levit. xix. 3.) Obedience to the Almighty, then, becomes the correlative duty alike of the parent and the child.

SECTION XXI.

The following precepts, "Thou shalt not kill, commit adultery, or steal," are given in exceedingly concise

terms, the reason for which will be obvious; they each contemplate the infliction of injuries, varying in degrees of malignity. The crime of violating these is so evident that the injunctions did not require elaborate exposition or enforcement. They are not addressed to the Jewish race alone, but to all mankind. In these we lose sight of the distinctions of sex and clime, of the differences of faith and opinion. The commands embrace the whole community, and he who violates them is a traitor to his race and a rebel against his God.

SECTION XXII.

The operation of these laws is not restricted to the simple act which is condemned, but to all the circumstances which can provoke or terminate in the offence. Thus hatred, jealousy, and revenge are involved in the conception of murder; impurity, wantonness, and lust in adultery; cupidity, ambition, avarice, and covetousness in stealing. Against these elementary sources of evil the command is therefore directed. The great object secured by obedience here in the economy of human life appears to be the protection of life, liberty,

and possessions, to inflict no injury, to perpetrate no wrong, but to regard the persons and rights of others as sacred and inviolable. We are indirectly taught to protect the interests of human life, to abstain from deliberately or incautiously shortening its duration; not to expose our own life or safety, or that of others, to unnecessary risk; to abstain from demoralizing vices, which destroy the body, weaken the mind, and leave the spirit a prey to the most slavish passions. Against these effects the commandment admonishes us: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Every species of unlawful desire is here prohibited; the avenues to the spirit must be guarded against surprise, the wandering eye, the impure wish, the wanton action, all tending to violate and disturb continence and self-restraint. Dissolute habits inflict fearful penalties; the mind and body sink beneath their ravages; the consequences are as bitter as wormwood, and as sharp as a two-edged sword. The deluded victim hastens to ruin and death, his steps bend downwards to the grave and destruction.

In reaping these fruits of folly, how vain is lamentation. With wasted flesh, a trembling frame, a disordered spirit, the unhappy criminal anticipates his entrance

into a world unknown. In such an hour of self-reproach, the stings of conscience are felt to be sharper than a serpent's tooth, and the heart exclaims, How soon have I sunk into deep distress, before the face of the whole world. Let us learn, then, to shun every word and scene which could induce misery so deep; and in order to assist us in the effort, let us remember that the eye of God is ever on us, and his presence invests our sleeping and our waking hours; neither darkness nor the shadow of death can hide the doers of evil from him. (Job. xxxiv. 22.)

SECTION XXIII.

The eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," prescribes that every man shall recognize the fruits of labour or of skill which are in his own possession or that of another.

The intercourse of life is sustained by mutual confidence; the property of others is committed to our care, we are admonished to respect the trust, and to regard it as sacred and inviolable. To defraud or cheat are violations of this command; they are the inflictions of injury, they contain the elements of lying and de-

ception, and are treasons against the welfare of society and the laws of God.

He who defrauds his neighbour or violently appropriates the possessions of another has, by that act, forfeited his own claim on the confidence of a community, and is excluded from its pale.

Hence, Scripture enjoins: "Thou shalt not steal, nor withhold from another what is his, and not lie; thou shalt keep nothing back of thy neighbour's property, and not rob; and thou shalt not keep back the pay of a day-labourer by thee till morning." (Levit. xix. 11.) Deception is therefore hypocrisy, in whatever shape or phase it may appear. To cause a man to believe a lie is to manifest in outward words or actions that which does not show the true state of the thoughts and affections. Such a one is described in Holy Writ as a thief of the heart; a most expressive phrase, and one which is intended to express consummate hypocrisy. Another passage compares lips burning with love when the heart is bad to an earthen vessel covered with silver leaf. (Prov. xxvi. 23.) "False lips are an abomination to the Eternal, but those who act uprightly are pleasing to him." (Prov. xii. 22.)

SECTION XXIV.

The ninth commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," is next to be considered. Its foundation is the truth so universally recognized, that words should always be indicative of the state of the heart whence they spring. The interests of society are advanced or injured in proportion to the truth or falsehood of evidence in courts of justice; the safety of society demands the utterance of truth. Solemn obligations devolve on a man when he assumes the position of a witness; he is summoned to tell the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; appeals are made to the presence and power of the Deity, and conscience is enlisted on behalf of truth. The transgressor offends against both human and divine laws when he offers evidence which does not comport with these solemn obligations, and becomes justly obnoxious to punishment. "A lying witness will not escape unpunished, and he who spreads fraudulent assertions will be lost." (Prov. xix. 9.) To confirm a falsehood by the solemnities of an oath is a still greater crime, but when we

contemplate the perils which threaten society, the probable conviction of the innocent, and the acquittal of the guilty, the magnitude and enormity of such offences become manifest.

But, to pass on to the lower gradations of offence, the commandment prohibits backbiting and slander: "Thou shalt not walk about as an informer among thy people." This class of offences is deserving of serious reprehension. What is more ungenerous or disgraceful than to speak evil of others in their absence, to spread false reports about them? "The pious man hates a lying word, but the wicked slanders and abuses others." (Prov. xiii. 5.) Obedience to this injunction does not prevent our disclosing evil and vice, when social welfare demands it; under such circumstances, silence is sin. We are, however, admonished here not to bear false witness, to adhere strictly to truth, and to refrain from inhuman or malignant exultation when we behold the exposure or the downfal of a transgressor.

SECTION XXV.

The tenth commandment is, "Thou shalt not covet." It requires that our desires and passions should be subject to the control of reason and reflection. The origin of desire is obscure, but its existence and power are matters of observation and record. To control these wisely, to render them subordinate to the dictates of reason and of divine authority, are matters of holy ambition. The commandment implies that we should guard the heart against envious or covetous desires, that we should not contemplate the possessions or honours of others with an emotion of uneasiness or dissatisfaction, and that we should not draw a painful and invidious contrast between them and ourselves. This desire, habitually encouraged, becomes ultimately a vice. Ambition, envy, discontent, and avarice are the evils which attend its train. Hence the injunction, "Thou shalt not covet." The evil is assailed at its commencement, the irregular desire is stifled in its birth, and we are led to contemplate the danger in its incipient stage, ere it has become developed into crime.

SECTION XXVI.

This command is therefore of deep importance, inasmuch as the mental and moral habits which it induces are of the highest value, and are productive of the most beneficial results. He who has acquired the habit of self-restraint has attained a proud pre-eminence amongst his fellow mortals. Duty will be a source of pleasure; its irksome and tedious observance will be no longer a matter of complaint; he will pursue the path of peace and virtue with cheerfulness and tranquillity, and leave behind him a fragrant testimony and bright example of the power of true religion. On the other hand, the man who has surrendered himself to the dominion of wanton or impetuous passions, who has permitted his heart to become the habitation of the most degenerate desires, the prey of intemperance, envy, malice, uncharitableness, or covetousness—such a character becomes unfitted to fill the station Providence assigns, or to discharge the duties incident to life; he endures his existence as a burden, and, oppressed with the emotions of disgust and misery, closes his career as a melancholy example of the per-

nicious tendencies of vice. Such lessons are daily taught by observation: "Be particularly careful, therefore, over thy heart, for this is the source of life." (Prov. vii. 23.) These passions soon destroy the man, and deprive him of the prospect of bliss hereafter.

SECTION XXVII.

In concluding these remarks on the commandments, it is necessary to advert to an obvious distinction to be observed between offences committed against God and those which are perpetrated against man. The former — among which may be specified idolatry and neglect of the Sabbath, as direct offences against the Deity—may be obliterated by repentance and reformation, and an All-merciful Father accepts these expressions of contrition and grief; but when transgressions affect the condition of society, or the welfare of individuals, the divine law enjoins the most ample restitution. In vain may we sorrow and regret; fasting and prayer alone can never repair the evil or lessen its enormity; society presents its claims, the injured demand redress, the act of fraud must be

acknowledged, and the dishonest practices renounced, the injury repaired to the utmost extent within our power, and pardon solicited from the wronged and the oppressed. It is only then that we can expect the forgiveness of the Eternal, and humbly sue for pardon and acceptance at his footstool. Yet such is the ignorance and perversity of our nature, that men who retain the spoils of fraud or violence are ready to slander and defame, while they seek to atone for these offences by fasting and prayer. Such conduct exhibits the most glaring hypocrisy and self-deception; it excites the horror and disgust of a reflective mind, and must be contemplated by the Almighty as one of the most flagrant violations of his law.

CHAPTER III.

SECTION XXVIII.

THE FUNDAMENTAL ARTICLES IN THE MOSAIC RELIGION.

THE objects of faith are twofold, and these comprise the whole of our belief. Firstly, truths which are deductions from pure reason; and, secondly, events in history and doctrines which are neither deducible from reason nor analogous with experience. Consequently we divide the truths of our faith into thirteen articles, viz.:

1st. There is a supreme and eternal Being who is described as almighty, wise, and good, the creator, preserver, and ruler of the universe, without beginning of days or end of years. Reason instructs us that

every other form of existence is dependent and derived; that animate nature could not have sprung into being without cause and origin; that the indications of design imply the existence of a designer, and the presiding Spirit visible in the creation is the Creator, God. The eternity of the divine Being is still further proved by the fact that he is unchangeable, able to create or to destroy. Immutable and self-existent, the idea of time must be excluded from our conceptions of God; a thousand years and a fleeting day, the revolutions of cycles and the passing moment, are instantaneously the objects of divine perception.

SECTION XXIX.

2nd. The next article of faith is, that God is one, exclusive of other existences, a Spirit with neither the properties of matter nor the limbs of a physical body. All living bodies are composed of parts, bones, flesh and blood. The Creator bears no resemblance to anything which he has made; the arguments of reason, and testimonies of Revelation, equally convince us of the fact. "Hear, Israel, the Eternal our God is the only eternal Being, and besides him there is none else."

SECTION XXX.

3rd. God created the world; in other words, he formed nature by the expression of his will. He spoke, and it was done, commanded, and it stood fast. In this wondrous effort no assistance was derived from other agencies or powers. Since its foundation, he has governed and upheld the universe; from him all life continues to flow, and through him order and regularity prevail; the winds and waves are controlled by his voice, and the orbs which roll through space obey his high command. Against such power no obstacles can prevail, no danger threaten; no difficulties obstruct it; who, then, by searching, can find out God, or know the Almighty to perfection? (Job. xi. 8.) We recognize material objects by their appearance, their colour, form, and size; acquire our knowledge of them through the medium of the senses. Not so with respect to our knowledge of the Deity. We estimate his power by the vastness of its effects, the diversity of its objects, the magnitude of its operations, above, around, beneath us, extending from animated nature to those remote regions of the universe which have not

been exposed to observation, and which may exceed the highest flights of fancy of the human mind. "The heavens relate the glory of God, and the firmament tells of the works of his hands." (Ps. xix. 2.) Creation is subject to vicissitudes, each form of life presents new changes, however slow and imperceptible; there is a period in the history of every creature when it becomes visible. The helpless babe increases into the proportions of a child, a youth, a man; nature then tends to degeneracy and decay, until the body returns to its native earth, and the spirit to God that gave it. The plant displays its flower or fruit, sheds its perfume, and dies. Motion and change are the conditions of all existence, whilst the Eternal mind continues undivided, and operates unexhausted. Hence arose the challenge embodied in the words of the prophet: "To whom will you compare me, that I should resemble him?"

SECTION XXXI.

But, it may be remarked, we read that Moses saw the Eternal, and many passages speak of the eye, the hand, and mouth of God. It is evident that such ex-

pressions are intended to convey ideas figuratively, phrases which accommodate themselves to our imperfect conceptions. As we are conversant with the eye and hand, these are employed to assist us in our conceptions of the knowledge and power of the Almighty; when, therefore, we read that Moses saw God, we understand that he had a more intimate acquaintance with his perfections and providence, explaining the previous expression more clearly, that God spake with him, in a perfectly plain manner, and not through enigmas. Again, when we read, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness," we have the same figure, conveying the idea, that the human spirit bears some resemblance to the Deity, that it is immortal, endowed with capacious powers, and that man is the only creature that is capable of acknowledging and adoring the Creator, elevating his own nature, governing the multitude of creatures, having all things placed under his hand.

SECTION XXXII.

4th. That God is the first great Cause, existing before the creation of the universe, immutable and perfect.

The excellence of human beings is relative, and admits of comparison and degree. The perfection of human character, however great, is sometimes eclipsed by more illustrious examples, and if we admit the existence of angelic nature, man is little lower than the angels. Celestial spirits are charged with faults, are, from necessity, imperfect and subordinate; as creatures they are dependent on the will of the Creator, upheld by his power, and clothed with splendour by his decree; they minister to his will, and their excellence, glory, and beauty are all conferred by him. If, then, the highest orders of intelligence are not self-existent, but derived, there remains but one supreme, eternal, self-existing Being, who governs all things agreeably to the counsel of his own will.

SECTION XXXIII.

God is omnipotent; in other words, he can create all that he pleases. Creation, let it be remembered, is the act of bestowing existence and form where it did not previously exist. The utmost exertion of human skill and power can only extend to form and arrange,

but no power inferior to the Deity can create. Man cannot create an atom, but he can remodel, form matter into new combinations, from materials which are already provided. Man can originate nothing; not a particle of air, not a single blade of grass, not a spark of fire or drop of water is he able to produce. As man cannot create, neither can he destroy; it is an axiom in natural philosophy, that matter is indestructible; we may, by some manipulation, some ingenious process, subject it to various mutations, but to destroy it is beyond our power, and one Being only, the Creator himself, can totally annihilate. The Deity, simply by the exercise of his will, produces light, matter, and existence, creatures, from the insect which floats in the sunbeam to the huge whale, adorns his creation with elements of beauty, and makes man in his own likeness. By that will the universe is upheld; without it all would be disorder and destruction: "He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood;" and, again, "Thou turnest thy face away, they become affrighted; thou takest away their breath, they perish."

SECTION XXXIV.

The perfections of God are blended, so that we cannot separate them even in imagination. The union of these is exhibited in the creation. The shapes, motions, and mutations of all physical objects convince us of the truth; the sun, moon, and stars in the celestial canopy, the earth with its mountains, forests, and flowers, the oceans and streams with their inhabitants, the cattle, birds, and reptiles, all testify to the presence of a wise, a just, a gracious God; whilst man, his noblest work, the reflection of his glory, gives additional grandeur to these impressions.

The order and harmony of the universe convince us that it is governed by one presiding mind. The sun who sheds his light by day, the moon and stars which glisten by night, the changing seasons, show that order is Heaven's first law, whilst the benevolence of God is proclaimed by the geniality of the spring; each plant and flower and fruit as they are ripened by the heat of summer, and the gathering in of the autumn, when he that sows and he that reaps rejoice together, the falling

snows and raging tempests, which close the wintry scenes, all speak a language which will be intelligible to the end of time.

SECTION XXXV.

The evidences of design and wisdom are still further illustrated in the structure of every creature. Each is to subserve some end, and fulfil some purpose; the arrangement of the limbs of the human body shows design and skill; the feet transport us from one locality to another, the head controls and governs, the eye apprizes us of danger, the ear detects alarm, and receives pleasure from sweet sounds, the mouth communicates knowledge, the teeth masticate the food, whilst every joint and ligament in the wondrous fabric shows forth the praises of the Artificer. Yet, vast and perfect as the physical arrangement appears, how much is it exceeded in the mysterious union of the body with the spirit! The elements most uncongenial, yet the union complete, so that intelligence flashes in the eye, resounds through the speech, is evidenced in gesture and in tone, and the body becomes the vehicle through

which thought is conveyed and awakened. How wondrous too the soaring of thought—its range; in a trice we travel from pole to pole, contemplate in an instant the inhabitants of every clime, pass, in our slumbers, from the condition of a beggar to that of a prince, and in our flights of fancy outstrip the fleetness of the wind or the flashes of lightning. When we contemplate these things, we are constrained to exclaim with David, "How manifold are thy works; they all prove thine infinite wisdom and goodness."

SECTION XXXVI.

Admitting the wisdom and power of the Almighty to be infinite, it will be equally obvious that no limits can be assigned to his existence and benevolence. All these perfections blend and harmonize so that they can, separately, neither be conceived in imagination nor perceived in reality. An architect may design a palace without possessing the materials from which to construct the edifice; the skill exhibited in the arrangements will be of no avail without the power to build; and again, the absence of wisdom in the builder may

give rise to exertions of power which are unproductive of good results, should he erect his palace in a desert, where the foot of man had never trodden. We may admire the hero of a hundred battles, or the inventor of a useful machine, but we love the philanthropist and benefactor of his species. These sentiments are heightened and blended in our conception of the Deity. Wisdom, power, and goodness unite in him, and diffuse their glories around his name, for God is good to all, his tender mercies are over all his works. And still more elevating is the thought, that such are the perfections of God, that the universe, with all its vast dependencies, will continue to be governed with uniform skill and power, that, as all events are known and the thoughts of man revealed to his discerning eye, no danger can threaten, no exigency arise without due provision, since the harmony of his laws and the benevolence of his designs effectually prevent the possibility of discord and confusion.

SECTION XXXVII.

5th. That the design of creation is to reveal the glory of God, and to endow man with sense and reason, that he may be fitted to discharge his duties, and enjoy the happiness which awaits him.

Reason demonstrates the propriety of acknowledging the blessings which we hourly receive, of recognizing the hand which feeds, and clothes, and guides us through our journey of life, expressing our grateful thanks, acknowledging our dependence on his providence, praying for future favours, and offering our adoration to him alone. Whether we contemplate the heavens or the earth, nature, with its countless hosts of creatures, or man in his diversities of condition, the natural and social laws, the organization or the operation of physical objects, our pleasure increases in the pursuit. As we unravel the secrets of the earth, or those of human life and character, we learn the importance of humility, and the value of true virtue; we strive, at an awful distance, to imitate the benevolence of our heavenly Father whilst we clothe the naked, feed the hungry, compassionate the orphan and the

widow, and pour the balm of consolation into the troubled bosom. Such are the sources of true pleasure, and such pursuits not only contribute to the sum of individual and collective happiness, but enforce, by bright examples, the claims of virtue on the homage and obedience of others.

SECTION XXXVIII.

6th. That God, in pity to mankind, imparted the gift of prophecy to a few pious men. Prophecy reveals truths which could be gathered from no other source, and holy men were, in past ages, commissioned to proclaim the will and precepts of the eternal King. It is formally announced, in Deut. xviii. 15, "A prophet from amidst thee, from thy brethren, like myself, will the Eternal thy God raise up unto thee, him ye shall obey." Revelations of this character we describe as prophecy, and him who utters them a prophet. God manifested his will by dreams and visions to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and more fully to prophets in a later age. In compassion to the weakness of human reason, which often errs, Revelation is

designed to correct these defects, and to present a perfect standard by which human actions may be tried. When false prophets rose, and spake in the name of God, a simple test detected the imposition; if the event came not to pass the deception was at once exposed, and the punishment was proportionately severe.

SECTION XXXIX.

7th. The revelation made to Moses was more ample than any other. Prophecy can only be interpreted fully by events. When first delivered it must appear obscure, if not incomprehensible; the degrees of inspiration vary, the circumstances under which inspiration is vouchsafed are different. Visions of the night and of the day — trances, when the powers of life are suspended—audible voices—solemn or ecstatic musings—these are the circumstances which accompany the inspiration of the prophet. On the contrary, the instance of Moses stands alone; his intercourse with God was intimate, to him the Deity appeared, and the sacred historian testifies, "And there never again arose a prophet in Israel like Moses." The Lord said, "Not

so my servant Moses; I spoke to him mouth to mouth;" which phrases imply that the legislator was able to comprehend the will of God, which he conveyed to Israel, and demanded their obedience in the name of the Most High.

SECTION XL.

8th. That the laws given by Moses after the deliverance of Israel are beneficial. Their promulgation is proved not only on the evidences of miracles, but also by the internal evidence contained in their adaptation and utility. Miracles wrought in the presence of more than six hundred thousand persons attested the divine authority of the Law. The people saw and heard, whilst the Eternal announced with deep solemnity the commandments and the Law. Miracles thus confirmed the obligation of unchangeable truths, and God intended to enforce doctrines and precepts which should guide future generations to happiness and prosperity, the object of which is still more clearly expressed in the passage: "That the people may hear when I speak with thee, that they may also believe in

thee for ever." (Exod. xix. 9.) The Revelation was ushered in with scenes of sublime and awful splendour; clouds, darkness, and tempest were the heralds of the dispensation. Under the influence of the terror which they awakened, the people earnestly besought that God should not speak to them, but that Moses should be appointed their mediator (Deut. v. 26); and their request was granted, God sealing the covenant with his approbation of their choice: "My servant Moses is trusty in all my house." (Numb. xii. 7.) It is evident, from the whole narrative, that Moses taught nothing without express permission or command, and that the most perfect harmony prevails between the doctrines and the precepts of the Law, the ten commandments uttered by the voice of the Almighty and the succeeding disclosures of his will.

The solemnities with which these commands were uttered by the Almighty himself are to be attributed to the fact that they comprehend all duties, and lay the foundation of every virtue and of every succeeding precept, and that they are of universal application to mankind of every class, clime, and degree.

When Moses descended from the mountain, after a

sojourn of forty days and nights, he produced the tablets of stone on which the hand of God had traced the ten commandments, and they have accordingly been designated "the tablets of the covenant which was made with Israel." The Revelation on Sinai has this pre-eminent distinction, that it was witnessed by multitudes, attested by miracles, and that the eternal and unchanging principles of universal truth and justice, the foundations of every divine and human law, were enunciated by the voice of God. This leads us to the consideration of the following article of our faith, which is—

SECTION XLI.

9th. That the Law given to Moses is eternal, and can admit of no change. God is immutable; no reason can exist for an alteration of his laws; in these every contingency has been provided for, and every vicissitude considered. The laws of man demand successive changes as new circumstances arise; the relations of society, the condition of a people, the increase of wealth or poverty, the relation of foreign states, all fluctuate,

and new modes of government and policy are required by new events and dangers. But he who can perceive the successive order of events, to whom all objects, from their formation to their decay, are obvious, who in an instant can consider and provide—with him there is no variableness; the laws which he imposes and the truths which he reveals are eternal and unchanging as the foundations of his throne.

SECTION XLII.

10th. The Creator is omniscient. From him no secrets can be hidden; the records of the past and present and the mysteries of the future are equally known. The earth, full of his glory, and far distant worlds are patent to his eyes; nothing can elude his scrutiny or escape his power; the thoughts of the human heart, its sentiments and passions, pass in succession under his view, and no event can transpire but with his permission. He sees not as man sees; he judges not from appearances, but from motives; his justice is pure and unsullied, without the admixture of forgetfulness or partiality in his decisions; he contem-

plates the virtuous resolution, the action in prospect, or motive whence it springs; the act performed in darkness or emblazoned by the light of day is equally the object of Divine perception. From this we learn the moral lesson, the utter vanity and hopelessness of attempting to deceive the Almighty, and the folly of falsehood and deception in our intercourse with mankind. The God of truth abhors a lie, and the severity with which he contemplates and punishes the transgression should deter us from its commission.

SECTION XLIII.

11th. That God is a righteous Judge, a moral Governor, who will dispense reward and punishment agreeably to the principles of truth and justice. In the administration of human law we perceive that the design of its enactment is to bestow reward and favour on the virtuous, and punishment and disgrace on the offending. How much more may we expect from him who is the source of rectitude and truth that he will judge righteously.

The reward bestowed on the upright who trusts in

God's providential and affectionate care amidst scenes of sorrow and pain will be proportioned to their fidelity and resignation. To those who reject the temptation to unlawful pleasure and vice, who spurn riches and honours when incompatible with virtue, the enjoyments of futurity and the approbation of God will afford ample recompense. The punishment, on the other hand, which is inflicted on the evil doer, the rebel against God's government, who adds hypocrisy to guilt, and violates the laws of the Almighty with recklessness and scorn, will be proportionately severe. God is good; his tender mercies are over all his works; he has created nothing in vain. Happiness is the design of existence, and creatures with an organization, powers, and instincts each after its kind are framed for enjoyment. When man offends he is punished; as a father pities whilst he chastens, so God unwillingly rebukes. In the Divine mind no hatred can abide. Anger and revenge are the attributes of frail and erring mortals; good and just is the Eternal, therefore he leads sinners in the right path.

Such reflections should lead us to submit without a murmur to his will, to receive with filial acquiescence

the dispensations of his providence, and, when troubles encompass us, to look forward to the results of sorrow, to accept them as from a father's hand, acknowledging the justice and the mercy mingled in the cup, knowing in our heart that the Eternal has punished us as a father punishes his son.

SECTION XLIV.

The judgment of God is perfect and unimpeachable, and exhibits none of the infirmities or prejudices which attach themselves to the decisions of the wisest of men. A human judge, though sincere and upright, may err in his decision; the innocent may be condemned and the guilty escape; his judgment is based on appearances; it addresses itself to the senses and the passions, but the judgment of him who looks in the heart is purely just.

SECTION XLV.

There are many who can form no conception of reward or punishment from observation of the apparent inequalities of human life. They are perplexed at witnessing the sorrows of the righteous, and the pros-

perity of the wicked. Many have enriched themselves by spoliation and fraud, whilst the virtuous can sometimes scarcely procure the means of subsistence; they labour and toil, and close their threescore years and ten in penury and pain. Such observations cause the impious to exclaim, "There is no God, no righteous Judge," and they falsely conclude that the scenes of the future will display the same features as the present. Our estimation, it should be remembered, is partial and imperfect, and our judgment premature; we neither know nor can we appreciate all the circumstances of the case. The proud man, whom we deem prosperous and happy, may have bitter ingredients of misery mingled with apparent bliss, whilst the pious and sorrowful may possess peace and enjoyment for the loss of which the riches of the world would prove a feeble recompense. In an unseen state, again, we have reason to believe these inequalities of condition will be adjusted, these difficulties will disappear in the scenes of eternity, displaying the wisdom and the justice of the ways of God to man. There virtue meets its due reward, and vice its punishment; the scene re-opens after death with new aspects and brighter

colours; existence does not terminate with death, but extends beyond the grave; the body perishes, but the soul survives to render its account to the Judge of the living and the dead, and to receive its portion of happiness or woe.

SECTION XLVI.

12th. That the Lord has not banished the descendants of Abraham from his favour for ever, that they should remain like sheep without a shepherd. We have lost our temple, priests, and prophets, we dwell amongst strangers and wander without a leader, but we expect the advent of a period, when our heavenly Father will summon Israel to return to the land of promise and restore our scattered tribes, when a new temple shall be raised, and the people shall serve the Lord with love and freedom. Prophets have announced the great event, and Messiah is predicted as the Redeemer of the chosen race.

This hope of redemption does not prevent obedience to the laws of the land in which we dwell, nor interfere with the engagements which our occupations de-

mand. We pursue our daily avocations whilst we devoutly expect the ultimate deliverance of our race, and fervently pray that the salvation of Israel should come out of Zion.

To this the admonition of the prophet Jeremiah directs us. "Thus speaketh the Eternal Zebaoth, the God of Israel: 'Build houses and dwell therein; plant gardens and eat their fruit, and seek to promote the peace of the city whither I shall have banished you, and pray for the same to the Eternal, for through it ye also shall have peace.'"

SECTION XLVII.

13th. That there shall be a resurrection of the dead and a final judgment. The belief is based on the prophecy of Ezekiel (xxxvii. 12—15); and our sages teach us (Aboth. iv. 22), "They who are born must die, and the dead will live again, and the raised are to be judged." Reason furnishes us with some proofs of immortality, whilst observation demonstrates that nothing in the material world is destroyed. Hence we can form conceptions of change, but not of annihilation.

The forms and aspects of nature vary and are subject to vicissitude, yet nothing perishes. Trees bud and shed their leaves and fruits, then wither and are resolved into their native elements; animals grow and die, and mingle with the earth and air, the insect passes through its stages of existence and its varied forms, yet nothing is annihilated or made in vain. The soul of man is the reflection of the glory of the Almighty, created in his image, adorned with his beauty. Reason discards the supposition of its annihilation as absurd, whilst warm and vigorous impulses urge it to anticipate an immortality. Its progress towards perfection, its exalted faculties, its capabilities of improvement and of happiness, all indicate its prospects of a life beyond the grave, its deliverance from the thraldom of the body, and an eternity from which all the contingencies of change and uncertainty shall be excluded. Relying, therefore, on the word of God, and fortified by the testimonies of reason, observation, and the hope of immortality, we patiently await the dawning of a brighter day.

SECTION XLVIII.

Our belief in immortality is strengthened by our knowledge of the perfection to which our nature may aspire. Man is furnished with mental power to perceive and appreciate truth, record it in the memory, interweave it with the judgment, delight the imagination by contemplating it, and render these exercises useful by cultivating that wisdom which will direct us in action, and tend to exalt human character. There is an insatiable thirst for truth and knowledge, which no effort can subdue and no acquirements satisfy. As a moral element, blended with our existence and our destiny, what purpose is it destined to accomplish? How stale and unprofitable would the accumulation of knowledge and wisdom prove, were we to admit that they perish in the grave; that faculties expand, powers enlarge, the kindliest sympathies are developed, the soul matures, and that the close of this majestic development of the divine image is extinguished by silence, darkness, extinction, and that the solitude of the tomb is attended with the annihilation of the soul. Such sentiments are

unnatural and conflicting, whilst the reverse of these conclusions agreeing with the testimonies of nature and inspiration, our being is not restricted to this sphere in which we dwell, and everlasting life awaits us. We aim at perfection, eternity alone can supply the means of its attainment; we desire happiness, its source and its streams are in the future; we are created in the Divine likeness, it has been partially defaced, heaven only can restore its lineaments; we are but preparing in the present life, our perfection must be attained hereafter. Thus speak our sages, "This life is but an outer court (a school of preparation), prepare thyself so in the court, that thou mayest be deemed worthy to enter the palace."

SECTION XLIX.

The belief in immortality will induce us to attach less importance to the present life, will defend us from the seductive influences of riches, power, and pleasure; we shall commence the journey under fairer auspices, and close it with higher honours, we shall prefer the solid

to the specious, the precious to the vile, the real to the false, and direct our energies to those results which are the objects of our existence.

In conclusion, we should remember, that as our term of life is short and uncertain, and the duration of the future is eternal, its claims on our attention are imperative, its interests immense. Each day will be regarded as a season of preparation, and death will be divested of its terrors, and the grave of its hideousness and gloom.

SECTION L.

We lament the folly of those who contemplate death with unconcern, and neglect the preparation which is due to its solemnities, but we also condemn those who all their life-time regard it with unmingled terror, who, participating in no enjoyment, torture themselves by inflicting mortification and fasting. Such conduct, we apprehend, can never commend itself to Him who has created nothing in vain, furnished the elements of rational enjoyment, and sent us into the world to enjoy

its beauties and pleasures. The wise king said, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment."

CHAPTER IV.

SECTION LI.

FESTIVALS AND FASTS.

THE appointment of these days may be explained by a reference to the characteristics of the Jewish year, or the division of time made in past ages.

The year is either solar or lunar, and is calculated therefore either by the revolution of the earth round the sun, or by that of the moon round the earth. The solar year is divided into three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter, whilst the lunar year contains three hundred and fifty-four days eight hours and four-fifths. The Israelites have uniformly adopted the lunar year as the basis of their chronology, and have divided it accordingly into twelve months, which are called, Tishri,

Heswan, Kislev, Tebeth, Shebat, Adar, Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Thamuz, Ab, and Elul.

In this arrangement we perceive that the solar year has nearly eleven days more than the lunar year; when, therefore, the surplus time amounts to about thirty days, the lunar becomes a leap-year, and has assigned to it an additional month, called the second Adar.

The Scriptural account presents the month Nisan as the first, in which the children of Israel came out of Egypt. From these we reckon the periods of religious festivals; this, therefore, may be regarded as the religious year. Another method of dividing the time is to regard Tishri as the first month, and the first day in the month we consider to be the commencement of the year, and all occurences in life are therefore reckoned by periods in this, which we denominate the civil year.

SECTION LII.

PASSOVER.

The first religious month, Nisan, in Scripture called the spring month, has always thirty days, and during

this period the solemnities of Passover are observed. On the 14th of this month (Passover-eve) all leavened bread, with whatever belongs to it, and the products of grain must be removed from our dwellings. On the evening of this day the feast of unleavened bread commences, and, by the divine command, lasts seven days; during this period we do not admit into our dwellings the leavened produce of wheat, rye, barley, oats, or spelt. The first and seventh days, which correspond with the 15th and 21st of the month, are considered holidays. [The intermediate days are half festivals, on which we are permitted to transact our usual business and to perform engagements which cannot be postponed without inconvenience or loss.] Rabbinical authorities have added to them two days, the second and eighth, as holidays, the reason for which appointment we shall presently explain. The great event which Passover is intended to commemorate, is the redemption of Israel from Egypt, and to recall the miracles and wonders which the hand of God then wrought, and of which our ancestors were witnesses—to bring into vivid remembrance the hour when Pharaoh and the Egyptians, filled with dismay, urged the people to leave the land

in haste, when, at so short a warning, no time was left for baking bread, or making preparations for their journey, but the dough, not yet kneaded, was taken on their shoulders, before leavened, and the people hurried forth from the land of Egypt and the house of bondage.

SECTION LIII.

The institution of the Passover is founded on the precept given by Moses to the people to kill a lamb, and with the blood to sprinkle their door-posts, that the angel of death might pass over their dwellings. The deliverance thus effected was worthy of commemoration, and a perpetual ordinance on the recurrence of each succeeding year displays the interest felt by the nation at its remembrance, and their gratitude at such a great deliverance. From the period when the Israelites left Egypt down to the destruction of the temple, it was customary to kill a lamb, and to eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs; and in order to recall to their remembrance the sorrows of their fathers in the land of Egypt, the custom, with slight changes, is still observed;

the roasted meat as a memorial of the offering, and the roasted egg as the feast-offering, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, the fruits mixed to resemble mortar, remind us of the exactions of the Egyptian task-masters, whilst with these mournful symbols of past sorrows we also blend thanksgivings for our deliverance, and our hearts expand amidst the comforts of our dwellings with the utterance of gratitude and praise.

SECTION LIV.

We have made mention of the addition of two intercalary holidays, the reason for which appointment we now proceed ot explain.

The Jews in Jerusalem observe only seven days. The addition of the eighth and the increase in holidays may, at first sight, appear to violate the command of Moses, "Ye shall not add and not diminish," and to involve a deviation from the customs of our co-religionists in Jerusalem. To explain this matter fully, we must relate the circumstances under which the change occurred. Our computation is made by lunar months, the period in which, according to the ancients, the earth revolves

round the moon, or, according to the moderns, the moon revolves round the earth. The day of the new moon is the commencement of the month; to ascertain this period became a matter of considerable difficulty, arising from the circumstance that the moon became invisible at the close of the preceding period. As the 15th day could not be calculated till the appearance of the new moon was known, the Synod at Jerusalem, in their anxiety to fix the period definitively, sent out, previous to the beginning of the month, their messengers to different places to observe its first appearance. On their return they gave their testimony, and after a comparison was made between the evidence of the several witnesses, the day was fixed, and was duly announced to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who thus kept the seven days strictly according to the command of Moses. But a difficulty arose. There were Israelites who dwelt far from Jerusalem, who could not ascertain the ordinances thus instituted. These persons, ignorant of the precise period fixed, kept the 15th and 16th days of Nisan as holidays, and the 21st and 22nd lest they should violate the Divine command. The addition of these days

sprang from their feeling of uncertainty and doubt, and not from a desire to introduce a new institution. And it is also to be remarked, that when, in subsequent periods, the wise and learned were agreed in the appointment of the day, and calculations had determined it with certainty, the foreign Israelites were willing to abolish the additional holidays, and had made application to the Synod for that purpose. The assembly however determined that these days should be observed to commemorate the zeal and fidelity of the dwellers out of Jerusalem. Such is the brief historical account of these additions, which were not intended as innovations but as memorials of past wisdom and piety.

[The members of the reform congregations do not consider themselves bound by the rabbinical ordinance of the double festival, but, regarding these days as opposed to the Mosaic command, they do not observe them, but keep those days only which are Scripturally commanded.]

SECTION LV.

PENTECOST.

The second feast we term the Pentecost, and it is ordained to be kept on the 6th day of the month Sivan (and the 7th is also kept for the reason of doubt). It is the feast of weeks, and of first ripe fruits.

The harvest commenced in Palestine immediately after Passover, and Scripture enjoins that the first-fruits of the earth should be preserved, and seven weeks numbered from the time that the sickle is first laid on the standing corn, and at the end shall be a feast of weeks in honour of the Eternal. It was strictly enjoined that we should not eat of the new fruits of the earth until the offering was made, and hence arose the name by which it is designated. It is true that the observance was especially commanded to the inhabitants of Palestine, yet that the great truths which it teaches us to recognize are obligatory on the nation does not admit of a doubt—the right of the Creator and Benefactor to receive from his creatures their recognition of the bounties and blessings yielded in the produce of the

fields. This is also called the Feast of Revelation, because on the 6th day of the month God spake from Mount Sinai, and gave the ten commandments; we therefore observe the day as one on which the wise counsels of Heaven were known, and we return our thanks with reverence and gladness for the possession of such inestimable gifts.

SECTION LVI.

NEW YEAR.

In the seventh month of the religious year, or the first of the civil year (Tishri), we celebrate the new year. In Scripture it receives the titles of the "day of remembrance," and the "day of blowing the cornet." An idea obtains that on this day God pronounces judgment on mankind; it has no foundation, however, in Scripture, but depends wholly on tradition. The cornet was blown as the announcement of the supremacy and royalty of the great King, and as a memorial of the sound of the trumpet on Mount Sinai which filled the camp with fear. A further symbolic meaning appears to be that the people should awaken from their

slumber, be admonished to repentance, excited to virtue, should calmly review the past and solemnly resolve to amend the future, to seek forgiveness of past transgressions at the hand of God, repent and reform their lives and habits, and thus indulge the hope of acceptance before his throne and of future happiness. On the first and second day, therefore, Jews spend their time in devotion and prayer, and keep these days as holidays.

[This feast is also kept in Jerusalem for two days; but the Jews adopting the reformed ritual keep one day only.]

SECTION LVII.

DAY OF ATONEMENT.

This festival commences on the eve of the ninth day of Tishri, and closes on the eve of the tenth. It is regarded as the holiest and most solemn of the festivals. Fasting, devotion, and repentance are the religious exercises which we observe, and to these the period is exclusively devoted. The authority for its observance is thus given: "Surely on the tenth day of the seventh

month is the day of atonement; it shall be to you a day of holy convocation and of fasting, no work shall ye be permitted to do on the same, for it is the day of atonement on which you will be pardoned before the Eternal your God. It shall be to you a complete day of rest, and you shall fast; on the evening of the ninth you shall commence, and keep your resting day from evening to evening." (Levit. xxiii. 26.)

The day derived its name of atonement from the fact that the unusual and solemn sacrifices offered in the temple were atonement offerings, and that the Israelites in succeeding ages who sincerely repent and reform would atone for their transgressions. Whoever, therefore, on this day has obeyed the Divine commandment and observed it with deep solemnity, repaired the wrongs which he has inflicted, sought pardon from those whom he has injured or defamed, confessed his sins with sorrow, and promised amendment, receives the full remission of his offences, and is accepted at the throne of God.

SECTION LVIII.

A great moral and social purpose is secured also by this institution. It is designed to promote a spirit of mutual forgiveness and reconciliation, to subdue pride and arrogance, to allay the passions of anger and revenge. The solemnities attending its celebration tend to secure these great results; for who can hope for pardon and reconciliation with his Maker who has not renounced all enmity to his fellow man?

The temple service on this day was accompanied by rites the most solemn and impressive. The sacrifice, the purifications of the priesthood, and the solemn entering of the high priest into the holiest place, to stand alone with God within the veil, must have impressed the worshippers with sentiments of the most solemn awe. But as we have now neither temple, sacrifices, priesthood, nor offerings, we observe the injunction of the prophet: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. xv. 22.)

SECTION LIX.

TABERNACLES.

The next festival to which we shall refer is designated the Feast of Tabernacles, or, in scriptural language, the "festival of gathering," or autumnal feast. The precept is clear and precise in enjoining the observance, "Seven days you shall dwell in booths, that your latest descendants may learn to know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I am the Lord your God." (Levit xxiii. 30.) "And you shall take unto yourselves on the first day the fruit of the tree Hadar, the palm branch, the twig of the tree Aboth, and the willow of the brook, and you shall be joyful before the Eternal your God seven days." [We keep the second day also as a festival, for the reason given in Section liv.] The purposes for which it was instituted are, therefore, twofold; first, as a memorial that our fathers dwelt in the desert in booths, and, secondly, to commemorate the gathering in of the fruits of the earth, the wine and oil; we therefore take and combine four kinds

of fruit together, and wave them as a token of thanksgiving before the Lord, partake of the bounties which are spread by his kind care, and bless the name of the eternal King, who has been mindful of our wants. We combine the different fruits, the scarcest and most costly with the lowly willow, that we may symbolically convey the lesson, that the hand of God protects with equal tenderness and care the lowly and the high, extends the provision of his bounty to every grade and clime, that hence we learn the lesson of humility and forbearance, not to despise the ignorant or poor, the labourer or the slave.

The intermediate days, from the second of the Tabernacles holiday till the Feast of Conclusion, are half festivals, and the last is named Hoshana Rabba, on which some particular ceremonies are observed in the synagogue, but they are of cabalistic origin.

SECTION LX.

The Feast of Conclusion commences on the evening of the seventh day of Tabernacles, or the 21st of Tishri, and the 22nd is a separate holiday, the authority for

which is, " On the eighth day ye shall have the Feast of Conclusion, and do no manner of work." (Numb. xxix. 35.) This is therefore called the " Conclusion Feast," as it concludes the three national feasts. On this occasion, as on Passover and Pentecost Feasts, the male population of Judea were commanded to appear at Jerusalem, to present themselves before the Lord. What an animated and striking scene was then presented to the eye of the spectator: the temple, in its majestic grandeur and beauty; the priests, in their stately robes, receiving the offerings of the worshippers amidst the hymns and melodies of music and of voices; the palaces of the kings, the solemn assembly of the synod, and the gathering of innumerable multitudes, all contributing to render its attractions most striking and impressive. These three festivals were scenes of joy and pleasure; the design of their appointment was, that the nation might have its seasons for religious worship, assemble at Jerusalem, show their attachment to God, to princes, priests, and judges, and thus renew, from time to time, their national union. These festivals also afforded excellent opportunities of settling family disputes, promoting concord, creating friendship, and con-

sulting on improvements in their occupations as agriculturists, or other affairs.

The Conclusion Feast of the 22nd of Tishri we also hold on the 23rd (for reasons mentioned in Section liv.), and, since more modern times, this day has been celebrated under the name of Rejoicing of the Law, when the yearly reading of the book of the Law is concluded and recommenced.

[This 23rd day being wholly of rabbinical origin, is not kept by the reformed Jews; they finish and recommence reading the Law during the afternoon service on the 22nd.]

SECTION LXI.

CONSECRATION DAYS.

In addition to the festivals already described, which are instituted by Divine authority, we have other days in which we commemorate the great events that have occurred in the history of the Jewish nation. On these occasions we are not debarred from pursuing our daily avocations, nor do we consider these days as sacred holidays, though they are seasons of rejoicing.

The Consecration of the Temple is the first to which we shall allude. We commemorate it on the 25th of the month Kislav, and observe it for eight days. The great event to which it refers is the purification of the temple by the pious Maccabees. Under the guidance of the high priest, Mathias, and his sons, the Israelites, in the year 3630, A.M., obtained a signal victory over the army of Antiochus Epiphanes. Having returned as conquerors, the temple of Jerusalem was purified from its defilement by the Greeks, the altar rebuilt and consecrated again. Tradition informs us, that when the Israelites took possession of the temple, they found a small vessel of oil which was used to supply the lamps of the temple, the quantity of which was sufficient for one night's consumption only; and as no more consecrated oil could be obtained, this, like the widow's cruise, was found by miraculous interposition to be sufficient to supply the lamps for eight successive nights, till oil properly prepared could be procured. For these reasons our sages ordained that, during this festival, we should light lamps in our synagogues and dwellings, with songs and praise and thanksgiving. To commemorate the event they also enjoined that the number

of lights should be increased by one each evening, so that on the first we light one lamp, on the second two, and so on till eight lamps conclude the festival.

SECTION LXII.

FEAST OF PURIM.

On this festival, which is kept on the 14th day of Adar, we commemorate the miraculous deliverance of the nation from death. We recall to our remembrance the decree of Ahasuerus and the evil designs of Haman. The book of Esther, which records these interesting events, is publicly read in the synagogue with great solemnity in the evening and morning, accompanied by special thanksgiving for so marked an interposition of God's providence. In our social intercourse on this occasion the season is distinguished by unusual hospitality and mutual kindness, by the interchange of presents, distribution of alms to the needy, and acts of benevolence. We regard these as sacred obligations which are demanded by the day, and the authority for which we have expressly given in Esther ix. 25:

"To make them days of feasting and joy, and to send presents one to another, and to distribute gifts to the needy."

SECTION LXIII.

FAST DAYS.

We now proceed very briefly to enumerate the additional fast days, having already referred to the most solemn one, the Day of Atonement. We set apart for this purpose the 10th of Tebet, on which Nebuchadnezzar commenced the siege of Jerusalem. The 17th Tamus commemorates the taking of Jerusalem previous to the destruction of the second temple (3830 A.M.) and many other calamities which then befel the nation.

The 9th of Ab is set apart to recall the succession of calamities occurring at that period, the destruction of the first and second temple, and the dissolution of the Jewish commonwealth, and is therefore regarded by us as a day for special fasting and lamentation.

The 3rd Tishri points out the slaughter of the ruler Gedaliah, who was left by Nebuchadnezzar to preside over the Israelites after the destruction of the first

temple, and whose death exposed the people to the most cruel indignities and sufferings.

The 13th Adar is designed to commemorate the remarkable fast instituted by Esther the Queen and the Jews who dwelt at Shushan.

CHAPTER V.

SECTION LXIV.

WORSHIP, ITS NATURE AND TENDENCY.

By divine command Moses erected the tabernacle and appointed the ritual or ceremonial observances for both the priests and the people, and as the command was explicit, the ministrations of religious worship were continued during the sojourn in the desert. This was succeeded by a temple reared by Solomon, and in his reign the solemnities of worship were observed with unusual splendour. The great truth was recognized by this illustrious king, and embodied in his consecration prayer, "that the heaven of heavens cannot contain the majesty of God, much less the house which he had built." An earthly temple with its gorgeous splendour

was yet both insignificant and worthless when contrasted with the immensity and holiness of God.

Worship is the homage due from the creature to the Creator, the reverence of a subject to a sovereign. That it contributes nothing to the majesty of God, renders no additional glory to the Eternal, is obvious, but on the contrary its effects are seen in the increasing piety and wisdom of the worshipper. The welfare of man is the direct result, the acquirement of those habits of humiliation, dependence, fear, and hope, which are essential to this spiritual excellence of character; the emotions of gratitude and love thus cherished not only ennoble, but prepare the spirit for the enjoyment of a future scene. Thus the psalmist describes the effects: "He who offereth me thanks glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." (Ps. l. 23.)

SECTION LXV.

The condition of the Israelites must be remembered. They were slaves, and at the time unfitted for the enjoyment of perfect freedom; and the reversal of their

condition would have been accompanied with dangerous results. The example of idolatry in Egypt had weakened their perceptions of truth, and had left their minds debased and wavering; it was therefore necessary that the first principles of truth should be communicated in a simple and explicit form. Hence the duties of the ten commandments were first taught, the avoidance of sins which would have been attended with peril to the community in succeeding times. Worship was commanded, that they might be induced to recognize at stated periods the unity and supremacy of the living God. Hence also arose the necessity of a priesthood to preside, of sacrifices to be offered, and of ceremonies to impress the minds of the assembled worshippers. These institutions were eminently successful; through them the people derived religious knowledge, and learnt to perceive the distinctions between vice and virtue, obedience and sin.

SECTION LXVI.

The erection of the tabernacle as well as its worship subserved these purposes in the wilderness, and when

the families spread in Judea, and founded villages and towns, the temple was erected in Jerusalem; for God said, "In strength will I build mine house to stand fast for ever." Jerusalem, the capital, contained many advantages for this purpose; it was the residence of the king, the priests, the magistrates, and the military powers.

Moses accordingly commanded that the people should present themselves before the Lord in the three great festivals, that their devotions to God might be accompanied with due solemnity, and that their respect for the lawfully-constituted authorities of the land and their union in the bonds of national brotherhood might be more firmly and indissolubly cemented. At these times the rites of hospitality were liberally practised and the people mutually rejoiced as members of one common family.

SECTION LXVII.

At the time the temple existed, daily Sabbath and feast offerings were presented as devotional gifts, and with these ascended prayers for the congregation and

for individuals. Men of every clime and language were permitted to enter within its gates and to pray before the Lord. Sacrifices were, however, restricted to the service of the temple, the place which God had chosen, and to offer them without its precincts would have been a great violation of the Divine command. Hence sacrifices ceased when the temple was destroyed. Jerusalem had been appointed as the city, and the temple as the spot to which these solemn offerings were to be brought. It must be remembered, that the cessation of sacrifices cannot affect the moral or spiritual condition of a nation; for in Jerusalem private sacrifices were not necessary either for worship or the safety of the worshipper. The man who never brought a voluntary offering was not condemned; the great principle being recognized, that God will have mercy and not sacrifice, that a life of virtue and religion is more acceptable to God than the most costly sacrifices which we can offer.

SECTION LXVIII.

Worship may be regarded as external and inward, as relating to the circumstances which affect the

actions, and those which accompany the emotions of the heart. Inward worship implies the reverential homage which we pay, in sentiments of adoration, confidence, and gratitude to the Supreme, our aspirations, prayers, and praises blending harmoniously with the declarations of God's will. These affections spring from our contemplation of God's works, his word, and providential care. We recognize his hand in the shining of the sun, the dew and rain, the fruitful field, and the provisions of our tables. His word reveals still fuller glories, viz., that he is a tender Father, a righteous Judge, long suffering and abounding in mercy; and whilst we meditate upon these truths the heart expands, the affections glow, the spirit is carried into devotional exercises of gratitude and love; we trust his promises with firm reliance, and offer the inward and happy worship of the spirit. To this David refers when exhorting his son: "And thou, Solomon my son, know the God of thy fathers, and serve him with an undivided heart and a willing mind; for the Eternal searches all hearts, and discovers all inclinations and thoughts."

SECTION LXIX.

Outward worship, however, respects those actions which should accompany the real and inward devotion. Benevolence and charity, however estimable, can never supply the place of external worship, or compensate for its absence; for it includes the acts of private and public prayer, and obedience to the ceremonial law. Neither contemplation nor study can suffice, as we must fulfil our duties, regard our mutual relations, and prove the sincerity of our religion by acts of external worship. We, therefore, present to God the homage of the spirit and of the body—the one to express our deep affections, and the other to embody them in outward obedience to the Divine law. The necessity of setting apart stated particular periods for religious exercise will be apparent; the avocations of human life, the engagements of business, would otherwise absorb all our energies and consume our whole existence, whilst the appropriation of periods for religious worship recalls the attention from the world we inhabit to the Deity whom we serve, and leads us to make prepara-

tions for the realms of light and immortality. Another important purpose which is accomplished by the institution of religious worship is, that pious feeling is strengthened by sympathy—a communion with others gives to it increasing energy and force; by the mutual cultivation of religious and virtuous habits we attain more readily the power and the facility of self-government, the controul of passions, and the formation of habits of obedience to God. Worship is, however, to be contemplated not only as a duty, but as a privilege, a source of pure and unfeigned delight. What can be more congenial to the affections than to speak often of the friend whom we love, and the home in which we hope to dwell; the tongue is loosened and the affections kindle while we dwell on themes like these.

SECTION LXX.

In worship we praise God with the whole heart. Our words of praise are but feeble indications of the strength and depth of our sentiments, the outward act being necessary to evidence the inward emotion; and as every good man loves God with pure and filial affec-

tion, it is but natural that such sentiments should give rise to songs of praise, or silent meditation, or obedience to the laws which He has ordained. When, therefore, in the midst of the solemn assembly, we publicly proclaim the blessings which we have received, avow our gratitude, read the most holy Law, and observe the religious rites which God has commanded, we stimulate ourselves and others to practise religious duties, and we deepen the foundations of true religion, fulfilling the Divine command, "And I will be sanctified in the midst of the children of Israel." We therefore regard worship as sanctifying God and exalting his name, and as the act of rendering homage and gratitude to him. Without these sentiments all outward acts and offerings are vain and worthless—a heartless prayer, an unmeaning ceremony, a posture of the body, with no intention of rendering homage, can prove of no avail to man, and is an offence against God, for the Lord looketh to the heart, every ceremony being designed only to remind us of God's providential care, and all acts of worship to be the expression of our piety and zeal. If we neglect the consideration of the design of worship, we fall under the

condemnation, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abomination." (Prov. xxviii. 9.) "Because these people came nigh unto me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." (Isaiah xxix. 10.)

SECTION LXXI.

In ancient times the Hebrew language was universally employed by the Jews, and extemporaneous prayer appears to have been the general practice. Each man, prompted by a sense of his individual wants and desires, conveyed them in the act of prayer without restraint; but after the dispersion of the nation, and when they had to sojourn in other countries, the knowledge of the language gradually disappeared, and they felt considerable difficulty in expressing their sentiments as formerly. To obviate this inconvenience, Ezra the scribe and the great Synod are supposed to have arranged some forms of prayer, and expressed them in the language which was commonly employed, and which now form the basis of the ritual which we use. This uniformity of worship secures a more perfect uni-

formity of religious sentiment and worship amongst Israelites.

The custom observed amongst us is, that where ten male Israelites dwell, they select a separate room in which they meet at the appointed times, the morning, afternoon, and evening, to offer their supplications to the Most High; and such a house of prayer we term a synagogue.

SECTION LXXII.

In addition to the worship of the synagogue there are special prayers and thanksgivings to be offered before we eat and drink, and retire to rest; we are directed to acknowledge the benefits conferred on us, and to solicit the continuance of God's favours. To habituate ourselves to devotional exercises, we are required to learn the Hebrew language, that we may be able to comprehend and employ the customary prayers, whilst we are enjoined to blend meekness, devotion, and sincerity of heart; then may we expect that the all-wise and merciful Father will grant us our requests, so far as they are compatible with our own interests and his

glory. The direction of our thoughts towards God thus tends to moral excellence and spiritual elevation, makes us contented with the dispensations of divine Providence, and liberal and just in our conduct towards others, whilst it inspires us with fervour and zeal in the discharge of our social duties. Important results may also be traced to the habits of self-research which are thus induced; we naturally examine our desires before we give them expression, we test their prudence and truth, and determine whether prudence and discretion will lend us their sanction in making them known to God.

SECTION LXXIII.

Supplications for Divine assistance will lead us to inquire whether the difficulties which we deplore, and from which we seek deliverance, were brought on by our folly or negligence, and whether the evil may not at present be avoided by consideration and prudence. When we pray for others we discover the useful tendency of such an effort in increasing sympathy, in deeper pity for their misfortunes, and in our greater

benevolence and charity in action. In the act of returning thanks for benefits conferred our enjoyment of the blessing becomes heightened, and is rendered more intense, purer, and more spiritual, since we refer it to the great source of benevolence and goodness.

The regulations of our sages with respect to prayer imply the necessity of devotion and attention, and it is obvious that prayer without devotion resembles a lifeless body, from which the immortal spirit has fled. Again, prayer without devotion resembles the flight of the arrow through the air, which leaves no trace of its progress. The mind should therefore be collected, the thoughts concentrated, the attention immoveably directed towards God, and the whole spirit should be pervaded with the solemn consciousness that the eye of the Lord is upon us, and his ear is open to our cry.

[Those who have no knowledge of the Hebrew language may employ the vernacular for praise and thanksgivings.]

CHAPTER VI.

SECTION LXXIV.

TRADITION, OR THE ORAL LAW, AND FOUNDATION OF THE MISHNA.

THE majority of the Israelites believe that God in ancient times delivered laws to Moses, which were unwritten, and that in addition to the books and precepts which are recorded, Moses received oral interpretations of the Law, which he communicated orally to others. At the close of his life we find that he appointed Joshua to be the leader of the nation, and that, in his hearing, he repeated all the commands and prohibitions which have been collected in the book of Deuteronomy. It is evidently impossible to suppose that all the detailed expositions of these laws, their

application and relative bearings could have been written, especially in the expectation of approaching death. Moses would therefore, it is supposed, content himself with delivering them traditionally to Joshua, enjoining on him that he should teach them without adding to or diminishing from their number. In like manner it is asserted in the traditions of the fathers, that Joshua taught them to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the great Synod.

SECTION LXXV.

The Synod, or, in the Greek language, the Sanhedrin, consisted of seventy persons, who were selected from the wisest and best of the nation; their president was styled the prince, and their meetings were held at Jerusalem. From this ecclesiastical court, which was considered to be entrusted with the duty of watching over and expounding the Law, the traditions to which we have referred were supposed to have been handed down, and thus transmitted, orally, from generation to generation until the time of Ezra, the wisest and best of the land, when one hundred and twenty sages met and framed these bye-laws, as necessary defences and

barriers against the encroachments which might be made either upon its letter or its spirit.

Schools and colleges appear at the same time to have been founded in different places, over which professors, deeply versed in Jewish law, presided. Judges were then appointed, who gave their decision in all matters of dispute, and whose office also it was to enforce the authority and obligation of the Law, and to expound its meaning according to the oral testimonies which they had received.

[Those traditions are not accepted in the same manner by the Jews of the reformed ritual. They believe that the Mishna contains a true account of many practices and customs that prevailed in the second temple; but they do not regard the Mishna in any other light than a compilation by uninspired men, whose motives were pure, but whose judgment was often at fault. Whilst, therefore, they observe many rabbinical precepts, they perform them because they are good in themselves, and not because they possess any binding religious authority. The only infallible authority recognized by those who are called the reformed Israelites is the Holy Bible.]

SECTION LXXVI.

In succeeding ages disputes and differences of interpretation arose; then verbal explanations were necessarily, from the infirmities of the human mind, somewhat obscure and imperfect. Occasionally the teachers of the Law omitted some doctrines and precepts through forgetfulness, and added others as supplementary; some who were possessed of more extensive knowledge explained the precepts in a new sense, or gave them a different application to meet new contingencies which arose, whilst others undesignedly corrupted the testimonies which they had received. The confusion thus occasioned became alarming; disputes and dissensions increased, the integrity of the Law was threatened, and it was necessary that some degree of uniformity in discipline and doctrine should be restored. To increase the danger, the teachers of the Law became reduced in numbers, through the oppressions of the people, and hence arose the emergency, giving rise to the collection and arrangement of these Laws into a more concise and harmonious system. Rabbi Judah Hanassi com-

piled (3980 A.M.) all the doctrines, explanations, and judgments which had been given in past ages, and committed them to writing, in the form of short sentences, noting the differences which then existed on controverted points; he also occasionally gave his own decision, whilst he left others undecided. All these writings are contained in six books, which, collectively, are styled the Mishna, which means the repetition of the Law. It may be urged that this was contrary to the letter of the Law, but the circumstances to which we have referred must be regarded as extenuatory, and justifying the act, and it is obvious that there are times when necessity requires the suspension of obedience to a precept, to preserve the integrity of the whole Law, or that of an essential portion of it.

SECTION LXXVII.

THE TALMUD.

The effort made, however, was unsuccessful, as in a short time the same difficulty and danger to the interests of religion were felt. The Mishna, with all its excellencies, was too brief, many matters were left un-

determined, and some were unintelligible without additional explanations. A hundred and eighty years elapsed and the evil was unremedied, when, at that period (4160 A.M.), Rabbi Jochanan compiled the Jerusalem Talmud, and a hundred years later (4260 A.M.), two eminently learned and pious men, Rabina and Rabashii, collected again the traditions of the past, explained them more fully, and illustrated them so that they might become intelligible. This work, which is styled the Babylonian Talmud, divided into thirty-six books, contains the explanation of texts of Scripture, the code of moral, civil, and ceremonial laws, much useful information in arts and sciences, disquisitions on moral and social virtue, and rules for conduct in life. These are all scattered in rich profusion, but with less order, amongst the treasures of the book, which may be entitled a universal cyclopædia.

SECTION LXXVIII.

The Talmud has been assailed and calumniated at different times by the friends and enemies of Judaism. Its friends have contended that some of the doctrines

and precepts are not worthy of observance, and its enemies have charged the authors with immorality, and held up its testimonies to ridicule. Piles of wood were often kindled for its destruction; in short, no production of human talent and industry has ever met with more ungenerous treatment, but the reason was, that they took hold of its shadow, without perceiving or considering its reality and value. It is only after a careful survey of the whole of Jewish history that the lustre of the work will shine forth. The non-Israelite, without the most extensive learning and incessant labour, cannot be expected to understand or appreciate its contents; but Jewish calumniators, who have renounced their faith from pecuniary or malevolent motives, have been deeply engaged in the attempt to prove its absurdity, and to heap dishonour on its writers, to please priests and monks; but many eminent Christian theologians, as Professors Rabe, Reichlin, and Buxtorf, have left their honourable testimonies to the value of the Talmud; the latter declares "that those are generally the despisers of the Talmud who have the least acquaintance with it."

SECTION LXXIX.

The Talmud cannot be considered as an ordinarily written book. It bears no comparison with any literary work, since its contents, figuratively speaking, exhibit a world of its own, which must be judged by its own laws; it is therefore very difficult to assign its true rank to the work from the want of a measure or standard, and even he who is endowed with the best knowledge, and acquainted with its peculiarities, cannot succeed in this point. It matters, however, less what the Talmud is, than what it has effected in history, that is to say, what it has done for the succeeding generations as the chief agent in their education. It cannot be gainsaid that the Talmud is not free from inconsistencies, like many other productions of genius, which follow their own course with a peculiar consistency and undeviating direction. These defects may be summed up under four heads: 1st, That the Talmud contains many incongruous matters, which it treats with too much importance and in too serious a manner, and some doctrines appear not worthy of observance. 2ndly, That it received from

Persia some superstitious particulars and institutions which presuppose the existence of mediate beings, which is contradictory to the spirit of Judaism. 3rdly, That the Talmud contains some expressions and views concerning members of other nations and creeds which might be considered as immoral and unsocial. And 4thly, That these bye-laws, which are supplementary to Scripture, appear superfluous and unsuited to the age.

For these faults the whole Talmud has been made responsible and condemned, without considering that it is not the work of a single author, or of a few individuals living in the same society under similiar circumstances, who would have to answer for their words; else, if such responsibility existed, the whole Jewish nation would have to be considered as the authors, and made responsible. Let it be remembered that more then six hundred years are represented, as it were petrified, in the Talmud, possessing a life of its own, conspicuous for phraseology and thought, as a literary Hercules, towering up unparalleled and incapable of being compressed into narrow dimensions. It cannot surprise us if in such a world the sublime and

the vulgar, magnitude and frivolousness, seriousness and puerility, the altar and the ashes, are found mixed together.

In order to answer the accusations mentioned before, we must consider, 1st. That we ought not to interpret all its expressions too literally, while the conventional phraseology of those times was eminently figurative. 2ndly. As a counterpoise to gross superstition, we find earnest warnings against superstitious heathen practices, and injunctions against the blasphemous idea of mediation between the great Creator and his creatures. 3rdly. In regard to the immoral expressions upon which the enemies of Judaism harp, they can only be regarded as hasty expressions of an exasperated individual, and as the result of observations on the circumstances by which the authors were surrounded. Their companions and neighbours were heathens, who acknowledged not God, and disregarded the ties and claims of humanity, and therefore some doctrines of reprisal and of retaliation cannot be considered as unjust, such having been so frequently employed in the decisions of judges and the laws of nations; but even those are fully outweighed

and overbalanced by the many lessons of humanity, benevolence, and love which the Talmud teaches us to observe towards mankind, without distinction of birth, religion, or creed. 4thly. Their explanation of the sacred volume only is, even by the most orthodox party, considered as the oral law, whilst their conversations, mystical allusions, allegories, parables, proverbs, facetious similes, are not regarded as doctrines; and those fences and barriers which they thought it necessary to erect at their times for protecting the divine Law cannot have been intended for eternity.

SECTION LXXX.

An infinite abundance of thoughts and stirring ideas are deposited in the store-house of the Talmud, but not all as a finished theme, which could be mastered in a state of somnolency; it requires all the acuteness of a vigorous intellect, penetrating as it does into the deepest recesses, pursuing it from stage to stage, till it often rises to such a height of incomprehensibility as to bewilder the amazed fancy.

The Babylon Talmud has been preferred as a valuable possession of the Jewish nation, as the breath and soul of their national life, and it became for the succeeding generations a family history in which they felt themselves at home and moved and had their being,—the thinker in the ideas, the essayist in the beauteous ideal figures and forms. For thirteen centuries the external world—nature and its glories, the pleasures and the sorrows of life, its stirring events, exhilarating and depressing feelings—did not exist for the Jews, or had only a phantom existence. Their reality was the Talmud; a new object was, in their eyes, considered only as true when it could be found sanctioned and attested by the authority of the Talmud. Even the knowledge of the Bible, as their ancient national history, the fiery or balmy words of the prophets, the deep gush from the psalmist's soul were often known to them only through the Talmud, and viewed in its light. But as Judaism has been founded on the ground of the true rules of life, and the Talmud discussed the realities of this world, the visionary opinions, the contempt of the world, the hatred to reality prevailing in the middle ages, the hermit life, the

monks and the nuns, could not produce any impression on the Jewish nation. In a word, the Talmud was the educator of the Jewish nation, and this education was not bad; as, in spite of all disturbing influences of exemption, dejection, and systematic immorality which did prevail during these ages, the Talmud fostered in the Jewish mind morals, the purity of which was even admitted by their enemies. It has supported and promoted the religion and moral life of Judaism, has erected for the dispersed congregations on the globe such a banner as prevented their splitting in factions or sects, while it has shaped the mind of Israel, sharpened their intellect, and has taken care that even the enslaved and contemned should not grow dampish, while the torch of knowledge has been kindled for them.

SECTION LXXXI.

The authors of the Talmud were unpaid teachers, and as they lived by their own industry, as blacksmiths, boot-makers, and by other laborious trades, they were independent. They used their freedom of speech and expression without fear of being considered by one

party as too orthodox, or by another as sceptics or innovators, while their pupils, in their ardent desire and eagerness that not a lesson of their teachers should be lost or forgotten, wrote down everything which has been embodied in the Talmud. Therefore we find in this work such latitudinarian expressions and lessons, that, if they were not uttered by such high authorities, but in after ages, when the inquisition was erroneously considered as the means for the protection of religion, they would have been despised, and the authors condemned. In conclusion, I say that every reflecting Jew who possesses a knowledge of the Talmud should regard this work with as much reverence and respect as the Christians and Mahometans pay to their sacred books; and it may be worthy of remark, that there is no moral lesson contained either in the New Testament or Koran which is not to be traced in the Talmud; and as the founder of Christianity was a scholar of a Talmudical college, it may be properly inferred that he and his successors are indebted to Jewish sages for the moral lessons which they teach.

SECTION LXXXII.

The work "Yad Hachsakah," written by Rabbi Moses Maimonides (4936 A.M.), and the "Shulihan Aruch," edited by Rabbi Don Joseph Caro (5325 A.M.), form the code, in concise and systematic order, containing the decided and established laws of the Talmud, with the omission of the discussions.

The doctrines and precepts of the Talmud are the material which furnish themes of instruction for the Jewish Rabbis and ecclesiastical assemblies throughout all generations; by their assistance the people are taught the true objects of faith, the necessity of discriminating between true and false religions, to avoid the superstition, idolatry, and infidelity by which they are surrounded, to perceive the relations and duties of the several conditions in human life, and the laws of God and of the state. In these books parents are taught the necessity of superintending, with a watchful eye, the conduct and education of their children, to make due provision for the wants and necessities of human life, to examine their conduct in the house of

prayer, to offer up their devotions with solemnity and decorum, to lay aside, in the services of religion, the distinction between rich and poor, and to remember that the Lord is the maker of them all, and to retain the deep impression that the vigilant and unslumbering eye of the Eternal King is present to behold the evil and the good.

SECTION LXXXIII.

To attain these ends more fully, it is provided that the wardens and ecclesiastical officers of the congregation should discharge their duties with fidelity, from motives which are pure and blameless; that they be accordingly selected from those classes in society which will exempt them from the sense of obligation to, or dependence on, their fellow-worshippers; that truth, justice, and impartiality do characterize their conduct, and that the welfare of the congregation be their only motive of action. Hence also it follows, that the congregation should obey willingly the directions of their religious teachers, and comply cheerfully with their suggestions, which have a tendency to promote the prosperity and happiness of the community.

CHAPTER VII.

SECTION LXXXIV.

DUTIES TOWARDS GOD.

Every reflecting man, without distinction of creed or country, will perceive that there are duties towards God, towards himself, his fellow man, and the state, which devolve upon him.

Our duties towards God consist in the acknowledgment of his unity, supremacy, power, wisdom, and goodness, and in obedience to the commands which he has given. From these perceptions of the divine nature, we are led to expect reward or punishment, to confide in his paternal love, to indulge the hope that whilst we seek his favour in preference to worldly

interests, with uprightness of heart, the eye of the Lord is upon us, and his ear is open unto our cry.

Thus we are furnished with an antidote against despair, a condition the most deplorable and appalling, against which the testimony of the prophet is directed: "As sure as I live, speaks the Eternal God, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but I desire that he may return from his wicked way and live." (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.)

All the duties of man may be comprised in the general precept, "Fear thou the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; walk thus in his ways."

SECTION LXXXV.

DUTIES TOWARDS OURSELVES.

There are duties to be performed to ourselves, and amongst those is that we should ever retain a consciousness of our dignity and destination, that we are created in the Divine image, and that eternity is our home and dwelling-place. That we are created in the likeness of God affords us the strongest motive to

attain to moral excellence and purity, to cultivate the powers of mind and body which God has given, and to strive to approach perfection.

In the regulation of our thoughts and passions, and in the formation of our character, we are thus admonished to use these powers discreetly, to direct them to wise and useful objects, and, in imitation of the Deity, to blend wisdom and goodness with influence and power, that reason and religion should unite to form our character and govern our lives.

It is true, that no direct command to love ourselves is given, but it is rather implied as a necessary condition of our being; but the Divine command, "to love our neighbours as ourselves," has recognized it so fully that it has made it the standard or measure of the love which we are desired to bear to others. Self-love, founded on self-respect in its purest form, requires that we should examine the aspects and chances of the objects which present themselves before us, select the good and reject the evil, that we should penetrate the surface, and not content ourselves with blind attachment to pleasing and grateful aspects which appearances convey, lest we should mistake the shadow for the sub-

stance, and find that our hopes are ultimately extinguished by despair. The body endowed with health and vigour demands our care for its preservation, and the avoidance of excess of appetite or passion which might weaken or destroy it. Considered rightly, the body is a temple for the Deity, a sacred shrine, in which his presence may be recognized, whilst our thoughts, our words, and actions show that we reverence his presence, and delight to obey his will.

SECTION LXXXVI.

Again, we observe that by self-love we endeavour to acquire perfection; this can only be attained by increasing knowledge, benevolence, and piety, our sense and reason, our perceptions of honesty, justice and virtue; every good feeling implanted or awakened in our nature, are so many sources through which we may attain to moral excellence. These lead us to consider the duties which we owe to ourselves, the care necessary to be bestowed upon the body and the spirit, and the collective faculties, and to remember that the bond of union is so perfect, and the mutual sympathy so

great, that neither the body nor the mind can endure suffering alone, the enfeebled body being accompanied by the sorrowful spirit, and the dejected mind leaving the furrows of its care traced on the countenance. The intelligent and serious man will thus bestow his care both on the containing casket and the jewel which is deposited within.

Self-love will lead to the exercise of prudence; we shall consider our condition and the circumstances by which we are surrounded. The regulation of our desires will follow,—never to indulge ourselves to satiety, and be oppressed by gluttony or intemperance and excess; to avoid the extremes of prodigality and avarice; to regulate our benevolent propensities and emotions, lest they should lead to self-neglect and poverty; in short, so to adapt our conduct to our circumstances, that we may examine ourselves rigidly, and return from the examination with a feeling of satisfaction and self-approval.

SECTION LXXXVII.

Self-love will produce industry, because this affords the means for subsistence and usefulness. It leads to self-reliance and independence which conduce to our prosperity, and provides against the wants and woes which threaten our safety. Thus wants of every kind are amply provided for; those of the body requiring food, clothing, and protection from the rigour of the climate and the seasons, those of the mind, moral, intellectual, and spiritual, by providing knowledge, wisdom, and religion. A sound body and a vigorous mind, knowledge to enlighten, wisdom to direct, and religion to elevate the spirit, all spring from self-love and self-respect, and show by their results the high importance attached to the Divine command to love ourselves and to diffuse the elements of love around us.

SECTION LXXXVIII.

DUTIES TOWARDS OUR FELLOW MEN.

The Divine command, "And thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; I am the Eternal," is the foun-

dation of all the social laws, and derives its importance from the love which we profess towards God. It is obvious that he who loves his Maker will neither neglect nor despise his creatures, will reverence the image of the Almighty though it may be reflected in the meanest form. Our mutual relation as children of one great Parent will lead to mutual love; for, as members of one family, our happiness will materially depend on that of other members of the household.

To assist the needy, relieve the indigent, to pour consolation into the troubled spirit, to compassionate the weak, and raise the fallen, will be regarded not as a duty, but as an ineffable privilege and glory. We shall feel that our great Father regards such conduct with complacency, and that our measures of happiness increase until the cup is overflowing. A heathen asked the great teacher, Hillel, "What is religion?" and requested him to convey his answer in few words. "It consists," replied the sage, "in this: Love thy neighbour as thyself; do nothing to thy neighbour that thou wouldst dislike to be done to thee. Here thou hast the whole law—all the rest is but commentary; go and learn it."

SECTION LXXXIX.

We have previously observed that the prohibitions, "Thou shalt not steal, kill, or defraud," were parts of an universal law, and not obligatory on Israelites alone, but embraced the whole human race, and the commandment now under review partakes of the same nature: love to man, without reference to country or to creed, to age or condition, love to the universal family of which we form a part.

When we find the word neighbour employed in the sacred volume, it embraces every human being; when it refers to the Israelite only, the word Hebrew or children of Israel is expressly added. An illustration of this occurs in the instance of the Egyptians, whose excessive and notorious cruelty to the children of Israel is recorded; yet even these are called our neighbours, our fellow men. (Exod. xi. 2.) The Scripture also enjoins, "Thou shalt not reject the Edomite, for he is thy brother." Though they marched out with a strong army to attack the Israelites, "And the Egyptians also thou shalt not reject, for a stranger hast thou been in their land." There is but one exception to be observed.

In the time of Moses there were seven nations whose iniquities were full, who by their horrible practices in idolatry and lewd abominations excited abhorrence and contempt. Against these the Israelites were warned; their society was shunned, and no intercourse was permitted with those nations especially named. Their remembrance has perished, and the exception exists no longer. Now we are enjoined that other nations and communities should form objects of our love, and that we should abstain from doing unto others that which we should dislike if done to ourselves. This exhortation strikes at the root of bigotry in every age and every creed, and utters its expressive condemnation of intolerance and mutual hatred, and urges the higher and nobler motives of philanthropy and universal love.

SECTION XC.

The history of the world has disclosed the fearful consequences of the violation of the command. Ignorant, prejudiced, and wicked men have presumed to restrict the operations of the Law to their communities and sects, and still the evil remains to be deplored.

Priests and religious leaders are often the advocates of intolerance, and are inflated with spiritual pride; they justify the emotions of anger and malignity which they cherish by the pretence of religious zeal. These men, however, show but little practical acquaintance with the laws which they acknowledge, and still greater ignorance of the God whom they profess to serve. The Divine command enjoins, "A stranger ye shall not offend with words nor oppress, and if a stranger dwells with you in your land, ye shall not do him any wrong; he shall be as good to you as a native of your land, and thou shalt love him as thyself. I am the Eternal your God." (Levit. xix. 34.) "For the Eternal who judges not the appearance of the person, and takes no bribes, and who loves the stranger, to give him food and clothing, ye, therefore, must love the stranger." (Deut. x. 17—19.)

These exhortations show clearly that the bigotry and intolerance of sects have been condemned, and that those who advocate them are wolves in sheep's clothing. To the priest it belongs to inculcate religious and moral duty, but not the right or power to blame or condemn his fellow man, or to cause disunion amongst the family

of God on earth. We pass on to notice that love to our neighbour embraces the condition of the servant and the slave, requires attention to their wants, compassion for their infirmities, provision for their comforts, and the avoidance of every kind of treatment that is cruel, or even unkind.

SECTION XCI.

Holy Writ prohibits fraud: "Ye shall not do injustice in judgment, in dry measure, in weight, and wet measure." The action is an offence against God. The position of the person against whom it is perpetrated does not affect the enormity of the crime; the amount of injury inflicted, or the suffering and poverty which result, form no standard for judging of its sinfulness; it remains a transgression against the Most High. Our sages, therefore, conclude that such an offence is not only against the laws of God, but that the offender is guilty of the unpardonable offence of profaning God's name. The reason which they assign is, that he lowers the religion which he professes, as well as his fellow-believers, in the estimations of others, and,

therefore, transgresses the command, "Ye shall not profane my holy name." Our sages also teach that every Israelite is commanded, by the Divine Law, to love those of all nations who observe the seven precepts of the children of Noah, to support the poor, to assist the needy; these must be performed by the Israelites with gladness, and every act demanded by humanity and philanthropy towards those who observe these precepts.

SECTION XCII.

The Scripture again enjoins, "If thy brother become poor near thee, and let his hand sink, thou shalt assist him, as also the stranger and sojourner, that he may live with thee; thou shalt not take from him any interest or advance, and thou shalt fear thy God, and suffer thy brother to live near thee. Thou shalt not lend him thy money on interest, nor thy food at advance." (Levit. xxv. 36, 37.) In this command usury is forbidden to be exacted from either the Israelite or stranger who is destitute of the necessaries of life. Again, "If thou lend money to any of my people that

is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury." (Exodus xxii. 24.) But what is intended to be permitted in Deut. xxiii. 21, as to the act of receiving interest, is clearly forbidden in the passages to which we have previously alluded. The just conclusion appears to be that, as the Talmudists decide, every Israelite is forbidden to pay interest to a member of his nation. A very striking reason may be assigned for this. The Jewish nation was originally employed chiefly in the pursuits of agriculture; trading and exchange of commodities were comparatively little known, the original institution of state polity recognized an agricultural nation; for this purpose the commands relative to the Sabbatical year were given, and the general agrarian laws were instituted. Under these circumstances, it becomes obligatory on the Israelites to assist each other in seasons of calamity or need, to grant loans without receiving interest for money or for food that was advanced. It was also strictly forbidden to pay interest, as agriculture could not yield profits large enough to defray the interest on loans, and serious evils might have been inflicted on the community had such been the practice.

Were interest to be permitted, the lender might allow it to accumulate until no means of payment remained, the results of which would be, that large estates would be transferred from the hands of the many to the few; an aristocracy would thus be created, founded on injustice and spoliation, possessing a power that would be irresistible, a political influence that would subvert the interests and doctrines of the nation, and render void those wise and humane regulations which were prescribed by the laws of Moses for the preservation of the state and the protection of the poor.

SECTION XCIII.

If this view be correct, it follows that the passage, Deut. xxiii. 21, is only a continuation of the preceding verse,—if the native will not lend thee without interest, thou mayest then give interest to the foreigner, but never to thy brother. Some of our teachers add the following explanation: "If thou hast promised interest to a foreigner, thou art bound to give it him, but if thou hast made such a contract with an Israelite, it is void, and thou art not at liberty to comply with its

conditions." Admitting, for the sake of argument, that the passage does not refer to the borrower but the lender, and that it means, "From a stranger thou mayest take interest, but not from thy brother," it would yet not permit us to lend on usury to our neighbour, who is not of our faith; for, in the first place, the passage cannot refer to usury, no word of such import being found in Holy Scripture. All etymologists must see the justice of the decision of the sages on this matter; for usury means more than legal interest, but nowhere in the Mosaic Law is any measure of lawful interest assigned; so far from this, interest of every kind is excluded from the enactments of that code, and, therefore, as no interest is specified, no word expressive of usury can be found; secondly, all our fellow citizens, without distinction of faith, are to be regarded as brethren, and from this relation it follows that we are obliged to assist them in the time of need, without regard to compensation. Have we not one Father? has not one God created us? Why then should one brother act deceitfully towards another?

SECTION XCIV.

The Mosaic Law decides that we are forbidden to demand interest from our fellow man if he be in poor circumstances. The consciousness of having done our duty and commended ourselves to God in this respect will afford us ample compensation. But if our neighbour should receive our aid for the purpose of extending his trade or mercantile speculations, it may then become lawful for the lender to receive a portion of the profits thus realised, or, in another form, the interest on the loan, such as custom and the law of the country will sanction; but should the enterprise prove unsuccessful, the lender is morally bound to take no interest under such conditions. By the Talmudical law, a person whose particular business is usury is not permitted to become a witness, nor his evidence, given on oath, held worthy of belief. Usury is a crime against God, the laws of a state, and the social economy. King David testified, "Lord, who shall dwell in thy holy mountain?" Who never lends his money upon interest. (Ps. xv. 5.) The Talmud, in explanation of

the passage, remarks, "even to the stranger or the pagan." In the same place we also read the following: "Moses taught us our religion in six hundred and thirteen precepts. David reduced them to eleven. Isaiah (xxxiii. 15) condensed them in the following six: 'He that walketh in righteousness, speaketh honestly the truth, despiseth unjust advantages, withdraweth his hand from the touching of bribes, closeth his ears against blood-thirsty calumny, and his eyes, not to behold the evil done.' Micha (vi. 8) taught us all the precepts in three articles: to do justice, to love mercy and benevolence, and to walk in silent meekness before God." From these reflections we learn that usury is offensive to God and unjust to man; and observation convinces us that unlawful gains are seldom productive of happiness to their owners, or long in their possession, that riches thus iniquitously gathered are squandered by their children, and poverty and sorrow are, in succeeding generations, the retributions for such crimes.

SECTION XCV.

DUTIES TOWARDS RELATIVES AND BENEFACTORS.

From the general duties to mankind arise special obligations to individuals, and our relations to them determine the precise character of the duties which we owe. The most important and interesting are those which are due to parents. We have only to contemplate the circumstances which accompany this relation to perceive its high importance. The care which they bestowed upon our helpless infancy, the tenderness and affection which they manifested in our childhood, the unceasing vigilance and anxiety with which they watched our delicate infancy, provided our wants, and protected us from injury and death, impose a debt of gratitude upon us which we can never sufficiently discharge. The impulses of nature and the sense of duty require that we should love and honour them, and seek to avoid that which would displease or cause them unnecessary pain. To return some portion of the favours bestowed, it becomes us to watch over their declining years, to smooth their descent into the vale of

death, to bestow upon them our tender and fostering care, and to secure them from want or poverty. Or if our relation is that of a parent to his children, then there devolve on us duties in that capacity, viz., to afford them protection in their helplessness, assistance in sickness, provide them food, clothing, and shelter, to lend aid to the formation of a healthy body, and to endeavour, by education, to form a vigorous and virtuous mind. In addition to these it will become our duty to observe the habits which they form, and the companions with whom they associate, to endeavour to train them to industry, frugality, temperance, and prudence, and to place them in occupations in which they can acquire an honourable livelihood, and become useful members of society.

Our daughters must be trained to domestic duties, and the cultivation of those virtues which will render a wife a crown of glory to her husband, and a bright example to her offspring.

SECTION XCVI.

The relation of brothers and sisters in a family imposes its distinctive duties, and love and harmony

constitute the true happiness of the domestic circle. Should circumstances render it necessary, these sympathies will then be exhibited, and should we be fatherless, and forsaken by the world, the bonds of union will be drawn more closely, and mutual aid be more heartily rendered.

SECTION XCVII.

MATRIMONIAL DUTIES.

These are important and sacred; mutual love and fidelity, confidence and esteem, form their basis. It is incumbent on the husband that he should cherish and esteem the partner of his joy and sorrow, and by his industry provide for her the comforts of life. Though power be vested in the husband to preside and rule, he will not exercise it wantonly or cruelly, but lay aside its appearance and seek to please his wife by the display of sincere affection, regard her as his friend and counsellor, seek her advice, and conduct himself with such uprightness and candour as will infallibly secure her confidence and esteem. If, unfortunately, the conduct of the wife deserve censure, he will administer

rebuke with all gentleness and forbearance, and thus show that she has not lost her place in his esteem, but will be offered the opportunity of retracing her steps and freeing her character from suspicion. In the general intercourse of domestic life, it will be his duty to avoid everything that could cause discomfort or sorrow, as these too often produce peevishness and irritation, which, if unchecked, grow into anger, and lay the foundation of domestic misery. Family discord leads to confusion and mutual contempt; the happiness of the household, when lost, is succeeded by aversion and contention; children espouse the cause of one or other of the parents, and know not whom to obey; the servants are distracted in their attentions, and become the object of suspicion or jealousy, and the order, welfare and prosperty of households thus become endangered, if not destroyed.

SECTION XCVIII.

Other duties remain to be discharged by the wife; she is bound not only to love, but to honour and obey. Her excellency of character will be manifested

in the arrangements of the household. Order, arrangement, and punctuality contribute largely to domestic comfort. The regularity of meals, the hours of rising and rest, are, though apparently trifles, of high importance; they contribute to prosperity and success when combined with economy; and instances of illustrious virtue in females convince us that a careful regard to expenditure, the conduct of servants and family, constitute an excellence of character which will always be felt and appreciated.

Her conduct towards her husband will be open and sincere; her aim will be to make him happy; her heart and eye will ever be directed to him, and sympathize with him in seasons of calamity, and rejoice with him in those of prosperity; and, to conclude, she will cautiously abstain from actions or language which might awaken suspicion or jealousy, remembering that she, in days of warm affection, dedicated her energies to his happiness and advancement.

A still more sacred duty remains in relation to her children. A mother has the most solemn responsibilities to her Creator, to infuse the sentiments of affection and religion into the opening mind, to check

the follies and vices of childhood in their incipient stages, to watch over the formation of character with deep anxiety, and to fan into a vivid flame all that is bright and good as the indications of future usefulness and prosperity.

SECTION XCIX.

DUTIES OF PRECEPTORS AND PUPILS.

There are duties also which we owe to our preceptors, as the knowledge which they have imparted may be of material service to us in future life.

Respect and gratitude are, therefore, the duties of the pupil to the teacher. The instructor should also endeavour to impart knowledge under the influence of the kindest sentiments, to teach with patience and forbearance, to direct the attention to the advantages which spring from habits of morality and virtue, and to set a good example in his own conduct. His object should be, not to receive the wages of a hireling, but to train the pupil for the present and future conditions of his life, to avoid intemperate and passionate reproaches, to endeavour to simplify the truths which he teaches,

till they become clear to the weakest understanding, to be patient, laborious, and compassionate, and thus to reap the fruits of a growing intelligence and increasing virtue in the characters of those who are placed under his control.

SECTION C.

MASTER AND SERVANT.

The relations between master and servant, the employer and the employed, have next to be considered. The duty of the employed is to yield obedience to the employer, to discharge his trust with all fidelity, industry, and promptness, so that the most perfect satisfaction may be given to the master. The duties thus devolving on the servant also imply the necessity of cheerful obedience and strict integrity. A faithful man will not dole out his labour and time to the assumed value of his wages, and yield them reluctantly; a reflecting man will not conceal from his master the conduct of others which may injure his prosperity; a wise man will not betray the secrets of his master's trade, but will offer labour, time, and skill as a cheerful tribute of

affection and respect, and conduct himself with such fidelity as will lend dignity to his character, and elevate him to higher positions of influence and trust.

The history of Joseph furnishes us with a beautiful illustration of these truths. Potiphar, his master, was an idolator and heathen; his practices were, therefore, most offensive to a pious Hebrew; still Joseph discharged his duties as a servant with such fidelity that he quickly won his esteem, and secured his confidence so fully that the whole arrangements of his household were confided to his care.

SECTION CI.

The duties of the master are equally important; to treat his servants with respect and kindness, not to overtax their powers, nor to reproach them with harshness or severity, to allow intervals of rest and of refreshment undisturbed; to remunerate for labour and skill according to their productiveness, without either abatement or delay; to rebuke kindly and patiently, to point out the evils and dangers of misconduct or neglect, and to endeavour to reform the character and win

back the erring man, and in connection with these the duty of rendering aid to the employed in times of sickness or calamity.

If by their aid we have ascended the hill of prosperity and accumulated wealth, riches have their obligations too; to restore a portion in aid of suffering and in defence from poverty appears to be one of the most indispensable of these.

The Scriptural precept is, "And when thou sendest him, the slave, out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty; thou shalt furnish him liberally of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine press; of that wherewith the Lord thy God has blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him."

SECTION CII.

DUTIES OF ECCLESIASTICS AND WARDENS.

In the exercise of the sacred mission entrusted by Providence to the priest, his actions and words should be free and not guided by individual influence; therefore he should not accept gifts or presents which would, indirectly and even against his will, bribe and incline

him to favour the opinion of the donors. However wise, just, and conscientious he may feel himself to be, he should yet ponder the words of the sacred law, declaring, "And thou shalt take no gift, for the gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous;" and as a gift given to him who is not in need cannot be called charity, it must be classified under the category of bribe. He who does not attend to this prohibition, neither his words nor his actions will influence his flock, and his judgment in private or in public affairs will always be mistrusted, since only he who is free and independent is able to obey the precept, "Thou shalt not wrest judgment, thou shalt not respect persons." It is a particular duty of the priest to respect the poor alike as the rich, and to admonish and preach freely what is right and good, and to expose what is wrong and evil, without fear, lest one party, by their ignorance or erroneous notions, consider him a sceptic, or another party, blinded by credulous desire, regard him as leaning too much to orthodoxy. He has also to teach the people, that they may know which are the precepts and prohibitions of divine origin, and which are enacted by human authority, or only

pious practices; and again, which prayers are instituted by the great Synod, and accepted by the Jewish nation at large, and which have been, in after ages, prescribed by single individuals, and were only accepted by some congregations, and rejected by others. Such instruction may prevent that which is often the case, figuratively speaking,—the throwing away of the kernel and holding the shell.

There are many other duties incumbent on the priest, which we think superfluous to enumerate, because the candidate for such an office should have acquired a full knowledge thereof, and should be inspired with such a high moral sense as to have no need for such an admonition.

SECTION CIII.

The warden of a congregation has also many most important and arduous duties to perform; we will only hint at a few. In the election of a minister, or other official, there should be no other motives but to select the best and the fittest person, without regard to private influence; and the elected should be so placed as to be independent of all those around him.

The warden has to support the dignity of the priest, and to assist him in carrying out what is beneficial for the congregation, but at the same time the warden has to superintend and control the actions of the priest; if he be timid and slow, or in want of moral courage, the warden has to stimulate and encourage him, or, if his movements be precipitate, to advise him to be moderate; and while the Jewish priests are not under the control of a higher tribunal, like those of other creeds, and while history warns us of the dangers and evils arising from the independence of the priest in former ages, and experience teaches, in many instances, that a control of their action is necessary, the wardens of the congregation have to watch over their actions, and co-operate with them hand in hand.

SECTION CIV.

THE DUTIES OF A CITIZEN TO THE STATE.

Having considered the duties which spring from the several relations in life which we sustain, another important class of duties remains to be considered, viz., those which we owe to the state.

As subjects and citizens, we form some of the connecting links which bind a community together, and, from our mutual compact and dependence, we owe fidelity to our country, obedience to its laws, and allegiance to its Government. As no society can preserve its order without laws, so no laws can be effective without the executive power and legislators to amend and alter the existing statutes that they may adapt themselves to the circumstances of the age, and be founded on principles of reason, truth, and justice.

All laws should be intelligible, and so perspicuous that every man can comprehend them, and all Governments should enforce obedience to them without partiality. Every man possesses natural and political rights to the free and uninterrupted exercise of his physical powers and mental energies, and to dispose of his possessions as he chooses; but every man must concede the possession of these also to his neighbours. To prevent the evil and sufferings of mutual oppression, and the infliction of wrongs, the law interposes its authority, and becomes the umpire to decide the controversy.

SECTION CV.

The legal right of a man throws its protection round him, and every step which he takes, transgressing the boundary, is an invasion of the privileges of another. Property is either individual or collective; portions of this must be regarded as belonging to a community, and its uses must be equally participated in by the governors and the governed. Each right imposes a duty, and, *vice versa,* each duty presupposes the possession of a right, so that their reciprocal influence and bearing upon each other form the solid foundations on which the dependency and welfare of society are reared.

SECTION CVI.

From the ignorance and natural selfishness of mankind, the nature of these rights may be mistaken, or their value exaggerated; and when an undue preponderance of individual interest is sought, and the safety of others threatened, the apprehension of these disturbances requires the introduction of express enact-

ments, to check their progress, that duties may be defined, the interests of others protected, and the mutual relations and privileges of the community be preserved inviolate.

To execute these laws wisely and impartially, men are selected to settle disputes, to punish offenders, to ensure respect and obedience to the statutes of the realm; and it follows, that respect and honour should be paid to men who fill these offices of trust, and obedience yielded to their decisions. Scripture commands, "Thou shalt not revile the judge, nor curse the ruler of the people;" and as a general truth it is applicable to all ages. The Talmud teaches, "that the law of the sovereign shall be considered as a holy law;" that with respect to all rules, commands, and prohibitions which the governor of the country dictates to society, we should obey them in all political and moral objects, and respect them as though they were issued by a king or a judge of Israel; that we should revere, honour, and love the sovereign and judge of every creed, as if they were of our own nation, and that we should always consider the beneficial services which the law and administration renders for the benefit of

society, by which the poor and the needy are protected, the widow and orphan assisted, and every one can enjoy, peacefully, the pleasures which his earnings and prosperity may afford.

SECTION CVII.

A little reflection will convince us how various and important the objects contemplated by a good government are, in the protection of our persons and dwellings; the supply of air, light, and water, for the purposes of health; receptacles for the afflicted; the arrangement of the currency; our coins, weights and measures, our roads, forests, and rivers; the education of men for science and art, to fill their several departments; the education of the poor, to check the progress of crime; our courts of justice; the army and navy to defend our country; the numerous officers essential to the regulation of these departments. Considering these duties of a government, we shall immediately perceive how necessary it is to render our aid to the promotion of these objects, to refrain from any act which might interpose an obstacle or produce delay, and, on the contrary,

to yield that cheerful obedience which will assist this supreme power to render these objects more easily attainable.

SECTION CVIII.

The safety of a country also requires that it should possess an army for its defence; for nations are often actuated by the lust of ambition, or the desire of spoliation, to attack and to destroy their fellow nations. To form an efficient army, it is necessary that skilful officers, well versed in military discipline and knowledge, should preside, and that soldiers should obey, that men should be selected from the nation, to serve their period of enlistment; and it becomes the duty of the soldier thus chosen to serve his country and his king with fidelity and zeal. Even his wounds are honourable, and his sorrows are to be respected. A grateful country should be disposed to recompense his courage, and offer him the tribute of her approval.

SECTION CIX.

Punishments are essential to the administration of human law, and, however painful to witness, they are

demanded by imperious necessity. We cannot exclude the operation of the motives, springing from wholesome fear, to warn and to prevent the recurrence of crime.

The welfare of society requires the infliction of punishment on the offender; its social order and economy would otherwise be threatened and subverted. Such are the preventives of public or open crime; but the laws cannot reach the privacies of domestic life, or the secret offences which men are prone to commit. It is, therefore, necessary that there should be modes of conveying moral instruction, such as those of public preaching, lectures, scientific institutions, which, by awakening new tastes, and imparting pleasures of a new order, may counteract such gross and morbid tendencies. Government, therefore—considered as the patron of liberal arts and sciences, fostering the development of genius, and paying the tribute of homage to intelligence—is entitled to our admiration and support; and whilst the laws restrain, and judges punish, the hopes of amelioration will arise from the diffusion of knowledge, from imbibing purer tastes, from the discoveries of science, and the increasing industry and prosperity of mankind. King Solomon

said, "Wisdom is better than strength, the words of the wise man are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruled among fools." Wisdom has the preference over strength; whilst power can punish, wisdom can convince, persuade, and reform, and convert the hardened transgressor into a penitent and virtuous man.

SECTION CX.

If such be the duties which we owe to the laws and administration of a country, it is evident that they apply with increasing force to the presiding sovereign. Admitting that the creed of a country is erroneous, obedience to the king remains a duty, and a conscientious man, who loves his country, will respect its ruler. The sages of Israel, who lived after the destruction of the Jewish state, taught us to pray for the reigning king or regent individually, and instructed us that the kingdom in which we might live was like the kingdom of heaven, that we should reverence and honour the king in secret as in public, as we are bound to reverence the King of heaven.

It is a duty of a loyal subject to reveal conspiracies against the safety or person of the monarch if he discovers them, that such calamities may be averted. The history of Esther furnishes an instance: Mordecai was a Jew, Ahashuerus a heathen and a tyrant, yet Mordecai revealed the plot, and surrendered the criminals to justice. How much more incumbent then is it on the subjects of a sovereign, where the same Creator is acknowledged, to prevent a catastrophe so great, and save the state from a series of convulsions and struggles. King Solomon said, "My son, fear the Eternal and the king, and never mix with those who will create disturbance." (Prov. xxiv. 20.) And again, "Even in thought curse not the king, and in thy most secret sleeping chamber do not pronounce a malediction upon the superior in authority." (Eccl. x. 20.) We are, therefore, bound by every authority, both human and divine, by every motive of patriotism and humanity, to pray for the prosperity of the land, for all in authority, that peace and order, harmony and prosperity may be increased, vices checked, evils redressed, and the causes of crime diminished. Thus may we hope, by rendering the aid of wise and enlightened citizens, by obedience

to laws, respect for our modes of government, and attachment to the land in which we dwell, to live in abodes of prosperity, contentment, and enjoyment, while the consciousness that these duties are performed cheerfully, as acts of obedience to Divine authority, will render their discharge easy and the reflection on them pleasing.

CHAPTER VIII.

SECTION CXI.

HUMILITY.

HUMILITY has in every age, been regarded as a virtue, conferring excellence on character, and ennobling and dignifying our common nature. It requires self-examination, and a due estimate of our position and abilities. The humble man will, when conscious of an error, frankly acknowledge it, and seek to rectify the mistake; he will do justice to the abilities of others, and be disposed to acquire from them the knowledge which he has failed to attain. This virtue is uncongenial to caprice or self-conceit; a consciousness of his own infirmities will lead him to regard the opinions of others with deference and respect; if, on mature con-

sideration, he deems their opinions wrong, he will express his own with caution and without arrogance. Whilst his own views are expressed clearly and impressively, he will abstain from exultation and unseemly triumph, and seek only to convince and to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. The humble man will love retirement rather than display, will prefer the shade, and will discover that this is the most effectual method of deserving and winning the esteem of others. Honour follows him who shuns it; and every reflecting mind will perceive that whilst its exertions are directed to purposes of usefulness it gains the esteem of mankind.

SECTION CXII.

FORBEARANCE.

From humility, forbearance and a disposition to forgive will naturally follow; for, as we are constrained to bear inflictions of pain and suffering from the hand of God, so, by analogy, we shall be led to endure patiently the wrongs inflicted by others, and whilst we seek redress by honourable means, we shall not be

ruled by the spirit of retaliation. When our enemies perceive the error of their conduct, and sue for pardon, we should bestow it without reluctance or reserve; not contenting ourselves with professing to forgive, we should endeavour to blot out from our memories the record of the injuries. Such conduct has in every age met with the universal approbation of mankind.

SECTION CXIII.

Nothing can be more pleasing to the great Father of our race than to perceive these indications of mutual affection amongst his offspring. On such scenes his eye must rest with complacency, and his heart rejoice. He who forgiveth because he knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust looks from the throne of his glory with approbation on these benevolent sentiments. Our sages draw an important line of distinction here; they say that there are four kinds of temperament or passion. One man is easily offended and easily appeased; in him the disadvantage balances the advantage. Another is easily offended, but appeased with difficulty; his is a bad temper. A third

can scarcely be offended, and is with difficulty appeased; in this case the good balances the evil. But he who can with difficulty be offended, but easily appeased, he only is the truly virtuous man.

SECTION CXIV.

INTEGRITY AND UPRIGHTNESS.

The duty of integrity comes next under our notice, and it is obvious that this is essential to the formation of excellence in the human character. When circumstances require that we should offer an opinion or give advice, we should act with straightforwardness and candour, avoiding the use of subtlety to perplex, or subterfuge to deceive; thus only can we lay the foundation of mutual security and confidence, and men will speak well of us while we do well unto ourselves. The sages teach the importance of speaking the truth, of saying nothing which will not bear the full light of evidence to justify it; not to speak that with the mouth which the heart does not mean; for he who is not upright in his dealings with man is not upright with God. The testimony, "He who walks in the upright way,

he shall serve me," implies, that he who has integrity of heart and action shows that he has reverence for God, whilst he who is not upright with man forgets that the actions of his life are observed and recorded by the Judge of all.

Expediency suggests the prudence of such a line of action, for he who would obtain respect and confidence from others must respect himself; uprightness of heart will receive sympathy and friendship in the intercourse of life; pride and arrogance must be replaced by humility and meekness, and thus only can we obtain the esteem and confidence of those with whom the intercourse of human life has been conducted.

SECTION CXV.

PRIDE.

How ridiculous does pride appear, whether we put it in beauty, station, intelligence, or wealth. Yet we discover many whose only object in existence appears to be the desire to eclipse or outshine others; arrogance and contempt mark their passage through human life, and thus they become isolated from their fellow men.

Such characters are unsusceptible of human friendship and undeserving of it, and in times of want and sorrow, how deep and fatal is their fall; despised by men and abandoned by God, they remain forgotten and forsaken, like a gorgeous structure that has been reduced to ruins.

Every man who is proud in heart is an abomination to his Maker, and his pride shall bring him low, while honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

A proud man cannot receive instruction, his self-sufficiency impedes his progress. A vain man cannot receive aid, inasmuch as he feels it a degradation to solicit or receive assistance, whilst a man of understanding and reflection will conclude that pride is contemptible and deluding, that its elements are incongruous, and its object so fluctuating and uncertain, that his confidence in wealth or power may be suddenly extinguished; that no acquirements, however splendid, can afford a compensation for the loss of the graces of integrity or meekness.

SECTION CXVI.

Should Providence exalt us, let us learn to bear our honours and distinctions with humility, and endeavour to become useful to society and an honour to the religion which we profess, remembering that these are treasures committed to our care as stewards of God's bounty, that the design of the Creator, in conferring these, was to supply us with the means of usefulness and the expression of benevolent sentiments.

The precepts of morality and sound policy corroborate these views; their compact requires that mutual aid should be demanded and freely given; history, shows that in great emergencies great characters are required and discovered. Rulers and warriors, counsellors and statesmen, conform to the necessities of society, and merchant princes or wealthy traders are found to fulfil the duties of citizens and subjects. Wealth has its duties to discharge as well as its privileges to sustain; to succour the needy, cheer the afflicted, and perform acts of mercy, are duties to be discharged, and privileges to be enjoyed.

SECTION CXVII.

ANGER.

Anger and a disputatious spirit lead to evil results, whilst the desire to live peaceably with mankind is accompanied by harmony of intercourse and general prosperity.

A meek and quiet spirit, desirous of promoting universal fellowship, will endeavour to reconcile and to restore concord amongst those whose bitter passions have long estranged and alienated them from each other; strife and discord interrupt the progress of individual prosperity; men who quarrel neglect their occupations, seek to enlist others in their contentions for mastery, and waste their time and energies in these unprofitable conflicts. The order of society becomes deranged, the engagements of business too often interrupted, whilst acts of mutual provocation excite deadly passions more fiercely, and the purity and peace of social life become disturbed.

It becomes in consequence the duty of those who wish to merit the appellation of philanthropists to en-

deavour to restore peace and concord, and thus to render the highest service to the interests of mankind in general.

SECTION CXVIII.

The causes of such strife will generally be found to proceed from the tongue of calumny, the hearts of evil speakers, and the credulity of mankind in listening to their statements. Hence the exhortation of the sacred writer becomes important: "Thou shalt not go as a tale-bearer among thy people." Every man should shun a vice so despicable and destructive. Slander is the foulest and the most degrading sin. The slanderer has in every age been justly branded as a criminal in the moral estimate of mankind; for he who resorts to such insidious assaults upon his neighbour's name or character is a coward and a poltroon. Of this the history of Joseph affords an illustration. Unhappily he attempted to lower his brethren in the esteem of his aged father, and the sufferings which he subsequently endured appear to have been inflicted as a just retribution for the offence. It follows also that if this be

an offence, to listen to the slanderer or to receive his testimony must be a sin. A sense of duty, honour, and religion should lead us to demand that the charge should be not insinuated but declared, and it should be substantiated by the most convincing evidence. Where these are shunned or refused, the offender should be treated as an enemy to the race whose name he bears.

SECTION CXIX.

VENGEANCE.

We are commanded to refrain from cherishing the desire for vengeance, and not to indulge in emotions of malice towards our enemies, however great the provocation offered: "Rejoice not when thine enemy falls, be not glad when he stumbles, for the Eternal would see it and disapprove of it." (Prov. xxiv. 17.) "Is thine enemy hungry, offer him bread; is he thirsty, give him water; and though thou shouldst thus heap coals of fire on his head, yet will the Eternal reward they deed." (Prov. xxv. 21.) "If thou shouldst find the ox or the ass of thine enemy going astray, thou must return the

same to him. If thou seest the ass of him who hated thee lying under his burden, then darest thou not withhold thy assistance from him, but thou shalt help him to unload." (Exod. xxiii. 4.) "Hate not thy brother in thy heart, and thou mayest reprove thy neighbour, but darest not cherish against him the remembrance of the offence; thou shalt not take revenge, nor retain any grudge." (Levit. xix. 17.)

The Talmud thus interprets the passage: If any one has refused thee a favour, and desires at any time hereafter any service from thee, thou shalt not refuse it to him; thou shalt not take revenge, but thou must neither say to him, Behold, I serve thee now, although thou didst refuse the favour which I asked of thee. As soon as thou speakest thus thou hast transgressed the commandment, 'Thou shalt not retain any grudge.'" "Say not, I will treat him as he has treated me; I will act towards every one as he has acted towards me." (Prov. xxiv. 29.) Thus, both the testimony of Scripture and the oral Law denounce the imprudence and iniquity of the passion of revenge.

SECTION CXX.

From these special laws, we infer the general truth, that we ought to love our enemies. Religion commands and reason sanctions the sacred obligation of forbearance; against this no argument can prevail, no reason justify, or even palliate its breach; we have no right to hate or to offend those who have been guilty of transgressions against ourselves, and much less to those who transgress against God; for these they are accountable to God only.

There are opportunities afforded for repentance in this life, and were we to become our own avengers we should deprive the offenders of this resource; and then to avenge ourselves would be to intrude on the province of the Almighty, the assumption of his prerogative as a wise and upright judge.

We are, by the considerations presented both by religion and humanity, required to make every effort to recall an erring or guilty brother by mild and gentle treatment, by displaying in our demeanour and character the perfection of virtue, and thus convey

the deep impression of its superiority to the habits of grovelling vice. On the passage, "Thou mayest reprove him," the Talmud remarks, "Endeavour to reprove thy neighbour in so gentle a manner as not to make him ashamed; for thou wouldst be drawing upon thyself a great sin, as we believe he who makes his neighbour ashamed has no share in the happiness of the future world. We must imitate the Eternal, who is a merciful judge."

An unkind treatment of an offender would only serve to remove him to a greater distance from us, alienate him still more widely, and render every prospect of his improvement or restoration more doubtful and difficult, and thus we should shut out the hope of reconciliation, to which the declaration of the Almighty affords a striking contrast, "The Eternal is good and upright; he therefore shows sinners the right path." (Ps. xxv. 8.)

SECTION CXXI.

CONCLUSION.

Looking back on what we have briefly stated, we may easily deduce the aim and end for which the great

Creator, in his divine mercy, formed us, endowed us with various spiritual faculties similar in their nature to those of his own being, susceptible of a progressive perfectibility; that is, by imitating God, whom alone we are bound to recognize as the Deity, to whom adoration and loyal obedience are due, to recognize him as the Creator of the universe, the Supreme Cause of all things, that it has pleased the Supreme Being, through his infinite mercy, to manifest his will and make known some great and precious truths, which men would have vainly attempted to discover; we are, therefore, bound to show our fear and reverence of God by obeying his commandments, without superstition, bigotry, or hypocrisy, also to love our fellow men as ourselves, to respect the law of the country in which we dwell as good subjects and citizens, and to endeavour to promote the welfare of society.

Such is the aim and end of creation.

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